

Sam. Walker Junr
SERMONS

ON

IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,

WITH A

TREATISE

ON THE

IMPUTATION of SIN,

AND OF

RIGHTEOUSNESS.

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*For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish
foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the
power of God. 1 Cor. i. 18.*

*GOD forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of
our Lord Jesus Christ. Gal. vi. 14.*

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P R E F A C E.

SOME who chuse not to encourage labours of this kind, plead in excuse, that the world is full of books, and that many more are published, than are profitable, &c.—And others go further still, and make it matter of doubt, if men's morals are not made worse by the multiplicity of publications on various subjects year after year. As to the truth of what these affirm, I have neither leisure nor inclination at present to enquire into; this I think seems pretty clear, that as all men do not write with a design to instruct, so all do not read with a desire to be instructed; but as some write and publish with a view to their own profit and advantage, others purchase and read with no other view, but to please and amuse themselves.

And perhaps this may not only furnish us with the most probable reason of the above, viz. why men's morals are not mended by much reading; but may serve also to suggest to us another obvious truth, viz. that books of wit and pleasantry, &c. are generally preferred to those instructive of the mind, and calculated to amend the morals. Hence, though much truth may be observed in the above objections, yet the charge is not well fixed; seeing

ing the fault complained of, is either 1st, In the reader, who either makes a wrong choice of books, and only reads such as were never intended, either to correct the faulty, or instruct the ignorant; or, in reading those that intended both, with too much carelessness and inattention. Or 2^d, Those books ought to be blamed, or the authors of them which rather tend to lead the mind astray, than conduct it in the paths of piety and truth. — Some object with the above, that there are as good books already wrote and published, as any we may expect; to which, I would only say, it is not usual (I presume) to complain that a cause is clogged with too many witnesses, nor does a truth contested become more doubtful by having a greater number of evidences to defend it. If it should be said the truth of the gospel is so universally received, and so firmly established, that further testimonies are needless to be offered in confirmation thereof; I answer, in respect to myself (blessed be God) and I hope the friendly objector this is true; but it is far otherwise in respect to the bulk of mankind. Nor need we look to the Jews, Turks and Pagans, who all want proof of the truth of Christianity; so long as christendom swarms with christian unbelievers, many of whom, though called by the name of *Christ*, yet are continually labouring as much as in them lies, to sap the very foundation of christianity.

The following discourses were not penned, nor are they published so much with a design to confute the adversaries of the gospel (this I leave to abler pens) as simply to maintain the truth; from this persuasion, that error is most effectually confuted, by a manifestation of the truth. I hope
also

also the following sheets may through a divine blessing be made useful to confirm, and establish the minds of some, who may not only doubt of the truth of gospel-doctrines, but of their own experience of the grace of God also.——If the candid reader should observe any mistake that may have slipped both pen and press, as I doubt not but he will charge it to infirmity, I promise myself a pardon; and should he meet with any thing that may thwart his own received opinion, I hope he'll consider what is offered, before he condemn it, which after all should he think it necessary to do, I expect he will moderate the sentence according to the equity of that rule, that what he requires, he'll not refuse to give; viz. the liberty of thinking. I only beg leave to add, what I have written in the following sermons, I have written in the sincerity of my heart, and with a view to do good; therefore, if this end be answered in any wise to any who shall read them, let the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ have all the praise; for to him alone, the adorable Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, in one undivided essence, all glory, might, and majesty are due in time and through the tractless depths of eternity.

5 JY61

HALIFAX, June 20, 1766. Titus Knight.

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S E R M O N I.

GENESIS ii. 17.

*For in the day that thou eatest thereof,
thou shalt surely die.*

THE doctrine of original sin, (as it is commonly called,) is generally, either believed and received, or discredited and rejected; as men attend to the oracles of God, in order to form their ideas of the truth of things thereby; or receive their instructions in the schools of the heathen, and model their sentiments by the maxims of philosophy. In the former case, we are presented with a plain, simple, and natural account of the state of men and things; what was the cause that first brought on the disorder, so clearly perceptible, and almost universally complained of, and what is its cure. In the latter, this plain and easy account of things, must either be perverted, and cruelly tortured, to make it speak something consonant to our pre-conceived

notions, as taught us without regard to revelation, and in which revelation is of no manner of use ; or the whole must be rejected as a cunning devised fable ; imposed upon the ignorant, by the subtilty and craft of designing men ; but unworthy of credence amongst those who will be at liberty to think for themselves, and resolve to take reason as superior to revelation, for their guide.

It is further observable, for the most part ; those who stumble at the sin of Adam being imputed to, or any ways affecting his posterity, are very unsound in most other doctrines of the gospel ; this being the port from which a man sets sail in scripture sentiments, and a wrong line of direction, leads gradually further and further from the point of truth. Hence some while they seem to compliment the Lord Jesus as a creature of the highest dignity, with high encomiums of worth and excellency ; yet withhold from him the glory due to his name, as the adorable creator ; nor *honour* the co-equal Son *as they* pretendedly *honour the Father*. Others, so mingle refined reason with pure revelation, that while they seem to allow the atonement made by the Son of God, and preach salvation through his blood ; yet have their ideas so confused, and the scheme of their doctrines so perplexed, that they attend not to the scripture contrast between the first, and the second Adam ; and while they seem to speak of Adam's sin unto condemnation, yet deny the imputation of Christ's righteousness unto justification.

It is highly probable, was this particular doctrine more carefully attended to, more clearly opened, more explicitly treated, and more warmly insisted upon by the preachers of the word ; we should find

find the hearts of our hearers more deeply affected under a sense of their depravity ; the truths of the gospel more cordially embraced, and the Lord Jesus Christ in the chariot of his gospel, would meet with a much more hearty welcome amongst his wretched and indigent creatures.

Is it not for want of this, that many think themselves to be rich, and increased with goods, while in reality they are wretched, poor, miserable, blind and naked? Will any but the diseased come to Christ for a cure? If we would be able ministers of the *new testament*, we must labour to make the people sensible, of what was transacted in the garden of Eden, and stands upon sacred record in the *old*. That you who hear me this day, may be reminded of your fallen condition ; and from thence be led to look for succour and salvation to the great *repairer of the breach* ; I must beg the favour of you to take a walk with me into yonder garden ; it is indeed a place, a garden of pleasure ; to compare with which, all that art improved, or nature *now* can boast, would be mean and contemptible ; it is a garden planted by God himself, it is *Eden*. We have here presented to our view, Adam in his perfect state, and the adorable creator of all things covenanting with his new made creature ; his grant was large, and loudly declared the goodness of his God ; *of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat* ; his prohibition was small, by which he might understand, that obedience was all the creator sought from his creature ; *but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it ; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

From these words, I propose to prove to you the following things :

First, That corporal death, or the death of Adam's body was a consequence of his sin.

Second, That the death threatened in the text, was corporal, spiritual, and eternal.

Third, That the penalty was inflicted according to threatening that *day*.

Fourth, That all the posterity of Adam, are guilty through his transgression.

Fifth, That there can be no salvation or deliverance from this curse, but by Christ.

I am ashamed to amuse you, and obtrude upon your attention this first head of my discourse ; which would seem to me altogether as unnecessary, and affronting to your natural understandings, as if I should go about to demonstrate to you that the whole is greater than any of it's parts, or that it is day-light when the mid-day sun shines full in your face ; did not the Socinians with an air of boldness peculiar to themselves, and an art of perversion never practised but by men of these principles, deny the substance of it. Should they deny that many children die in their infancy, and who could not be guilty of actual sins ; matter of fact would every day rise up in judgment against them, and condemn their assertion as false in the face of the world ; and to allow that such infants die in consequence of Adam's sin, would clash with their favourite notion of original purity, before which *Diana*, nothing must stand, that force or fraud can overturn ; therefore it must be maintained at all events, that death is common to us,
not

not as sinners, but as men, and that infants die, not because they are the children of a fallen parent, but a perfect.

When the all-wise creator, is represented in the sacred account of this affair, as covenanting with his creature, this was appointed as the test of his obedience, *of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it*; and the penalty to be inflicted in consequence of disobedience, was set before him in these words, *for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, (Moth tamuth) dying, thou shalt die*; the ingemination, or repetition of the word in the original, indicates the certainty of *dying*; and wherein *this* did consist, must either be known to Adam, or the sanction would lose its force. But the supposition cannot be admitted without absurdity, that, because Adam had not seen any image of death amongst any of the creatures, (death as yet not having entered into the world) therefore, he must be a stranger to what it meant; seeing, *Adam* was now in *honor*, stood upright and fearless in the presence of his maker, and possessed a penetration of judgment (I think it is undoubted) far superior to any of his posterity. In the preceding chapter, ver. 29th, 30th, we find the munificent creator conferring upon the beloved image of himself, a right and title to every herb of the field, and every plant of the ground; *and God said, behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth; and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.* This grant, Adam had in common with the beasts of the earth; *and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to*

every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is LIFE, I have given every green herb for meat. Now to suppose that Adam was a stranger to death, as consisting in a negation, or deprivation of that *life* he saw the beasts of the earth enjoy in common with himself; must be to suppose him wanting of that understanding, whereby he could discern betwixt a beast and a tree, or himself and an herb of the field.

It cannot be supposed, that whatever conceptions Adam had of spiritual death, as contained in the threatening; that he did not comprehend in his idea, the death of the body also, as he would necessarily understand and suppose his creator as speaking to him in words to this import,
 “ For my own glory and pleasure I have created
 “ thee, and called thee into being by the word
 “ of my power; I have formed for thee a body,
 “ from the dust of the ground, and have animated it with a living soul. I have endued thee
 “ with a superior faculty, by which thou standest
 “ distinguishd from all earth-born creatures, and
 “ art capable of contemplating thy own happiness, and the bounteous liberality of thy benefactor. I have planted this garden for thine
 “ abode, and have plenteously provided for thy
 “ table, every thing necessary to support thy
 “ earthly frame, and render thy being intirely
 “ comfortable; freely take of every herb and
 “ tree, eat, live, and enjoy the blessing of thy
 “ being, as the reward of thy obedience, and
 “ commensurate unto it. But know assuredly,
 “ that if thou art disobedient, thou shalt forfeit
 “ thy title to all these favours; the herb of the
 “ field which I have now appointed, and endued
 “ with

“ with a power to perpetuate thy existence ; shall,
 “ deprived of this life-giving quality, minister
 “ mortality to thy dying body ; while the com-
 “ municated rays of my spirit, intercepted and
 “ cut off, shall leave thy beclouded soul in dark-
 “ ness and distress.” Now in this representation
 of the passage, (which seems to me natural and
 easy) it appears impossible that Adam should over-
 look the circumstance of corporal death, as con-
 tained in this threatening ; in my opinion it would
 be far less absurd to suppose, that he had an eye
 to nothing else.

2d. That bodily death, was a consequence of
 man’s disobedience, appears from the execution
 of the sentence, *chap. 3d, ver. 19th*, with which
 is closed the solemn trial of the unhappy offenders,
 now doomed to the death they had deserved (ex-
 cept in hope of a deliverer.) The whole of this
 transaction begun at *ver. 8th*. carries something
 in it stupendiously solemn, and strikingly awful.
 Satan had now betrayed them into sin, and sin
 had plunged them into ruin ; fearful and amazed
 they flee, *when none pursues*, and would be glad
 to find an asylum in the thickest gloom of impe-
 netrable darkness, to hide their guilty heads from
 their offended God. But where shall a sinner flee
 from his presence, or whither shall the guilty go
 from his spirit ? The voice of the Lord God
 summons them to the bar ; to which, though with
 the greatest reluctance, they are constrained to
 come. The fact appears too full against them to
 be denied ; and the evidence too firm and strong,
 to be baffled in the inquisition ; but mark the ef-
 fect of sin ; what they cannot deny, they attempt
 to extenuate and lessen, and instead of taking to
 them-

themselves the shame and fault which belonged unto them, they endeavour by any means to avoid, and cast upon another. The man lost to all sense of gratitude reflects upon the benignity of his maker, as though in making an help meet for him, and which should compleat his happiness, he had given her to be a snare and a trap unto him, to entice and draw him into sin; *the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat*; and quite void of natural affection to her that was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, he openly accused, and turned informer at the bar. Nor had the woman more remorse for the crime she now stood accused of; for instead of pleading guilty, before her judge she would justify herself by impeaching the serpent; *the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat*. However, both acknowledge the fact, *I did eat*, and fall obnoxious to the penalty. The prisoners at the bar thus found guilty before the righteous judge of all the earth, are, as it were remanded to prison, with this sentence, *to the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children. And unto Adam, he said, — cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

Now if bodily death intimated in these words, *dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*, was not the consequence of this transgression, but would equally and certainly have been the case, if man had not sinned at all; then we must suppose the sentence passed by the all-wise judge,

to have run in this strain, " Because thou hast
 " done this thing, and hast eaten of the tree,
 " of which I commanded thee saying, thou shalt
 " not eat of it; thou shalt surely *return to*
 " *the ground*, from whence I took thee, and
 " agreeable to my purpose concerning thee, if
 " thou hadst not sinned; *for dust thou art, and*
 " *unto dust thou shalt return*, not in consequence
 " of thy sin, or by way of punishment, for thy
 " disobedience; but according to thy nature,
 " which was made subject to mortality and death,
 " and my unalterable design, which was that
 " thou shouldest die." Now, if we would not
 be guilty of the supposition of a procedure so
 unbecoming the omniscient *Jehovah*; let us ad-
 mit the plain, literal and commonly received o-
 pinion of this important fact; that Adam, as the
 just reward of his disobedience, and as the penal
 sanction of his sin, was doomed to return to his
 original dust, a monument of the divine displea-
 sure against it.

3d. That bodily death, is a punishment inflicted
 because of sin, appears from the divine proce-
 dure, in all ages and places of the world. Why
 did God bring a mighty flood of waters over the
 whole earth, and thereby destroy both man and
 beast? (except Noath and his family.) Was it
 not because *all flesh had corrupted His way upon*
the earth? Gen. vi. 12. *His way*, had violated
 his law, *sinned and come short of his glory.* Rom.
 iii. 23. Why were the cities of the plain over-
 thrown with such a marvellous destruction? When
 it is said, *the Lord rained brimstone and fire from*
the Lord, out of heaven. Gen. xix. 24. God
 himself gives us the reason, *because the cry of*
Sodom

Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous. Ch. xviii. 20. 19. 13. To proceed to adduce proofs of this kind, from the word of God, would oblige me to transcribe a great part of the bible. I shall close this head with observing to you, that while we insist upon bodily death being the punishment of sin, we are kept in countenance by having Paul the preacher for our president. Two passages cited from his writings, may serve to confirm my assertion; the one from Rom. v. 12. *by one man, even Adam, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, as the wages of disobedience; for the wages of sin is death, and so death passed upon all men,* indicating that they were diseased, having been infected with the common contagion, *for that all have sinned; sinned in the loins of Adam; otherwise death passed upon some that had not sinned at all, even infants and they were punished without fault, and died without disease or sickness.* The other passage is from 1 Cor. xv. 21. where the apostle is proving the certainty of a resurrection of the just. *Since by man, even the first man, here opposed to the second man or Adam the Lord Jesus Christ; came death, namely, bodily death, for this is also opposed to bodily life, or the resurrection of the body from the grave; so that, that life the second Adam restores in the resurrection, is the life that was forfeited and lost, by the first Adam in the fall; but the life here spoken of, is that of the body, therefore such is the death, the consequence of sin.*

I have dwelt the longer upon this head, because of it's importance; the opposers of the doctrine of original sin, are well aware of the
insu-

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Insuperable difficulties that will croud in upon them on granting this point, and therefore turn all their sophistical artillery this way.

I proceed in the second place to prove, that although corporal or bodily death, was contained in the threatening against disobedience; yet this was not all the penalty; but death corporal, death spiritual, and death eternal, were comprehended therein.

It is more than probable that, when God threatened Adam with death, in case of disobedience; the death with which he was threatened, had respect unto the life he then enjoyed; and would if inflicted, consist in a deprivation of it. But the life Adam enjoyed, was as much superior to that of the beasts, as the rational soul is to the sensitive; or as a life spent in an union with, and an enjoyment of God, is to that which is spent without God in the world. When the Lord God formed the *earth and the world*, birds and beasts, fishes and creeping things, his almighty fiat went forth, and *it was done*, he commanded and the deep foundations of the earth stood firm; but when man must be called into being, a council is called in heaven. Not that God wanted power or wisdom, to create man more than any other creature; but to teach us to aspire to more exalted joys, than brute beasts partake of; and not to dishonour that nature by sinful practices, the great creator has put such a distinguishing honor upon. In making the beasts, &c. a single fiat perfected the work; but in making man, there is a twofold act; and the Lord God formed *man of the dust of the ground*, alluding to his animal life, enjoyed in common with the beasts
of

of the field, &c. *and breathed into his nostrils, the breath of life*; alluding to the rational life which was peculiar to himself. Hence it is said by the wise man, *the spirit of a beast goeth downward*, that is, the vital flame which animated it's form, becomes totally extinct when the creature dies; *but the spirit of a man goeth upward*; when his *body returns* pursuant to the solemn sentence, *to the dust*, his *spirit*, the inextinguishable and immortal fire that animated his earthly body, *shall return to God that gave it*. Furthermore, it is observable, that *when the Lord God had formed man of the dust of the ground*, that he *breathed into him*, (*Nishmath Hbajim*,) *the breath of lives*, not of *life*, in the singular number; because he was a compound creature, and enjoyed life, not only in common with the beast, but in a way peculiar to himself; but *lives*, the animal, and the rational. Thus Adam, when coming from the hands of his maker, and at what time he was pleased to signify his good pleasure towards him, in entering into covenant with him, stood possessed of a natural and spiritual *life*; the latter of which, continued to him in consequence of his obedience, would have constituted, what I here mean by *life eternal*. Now it cannot reasonably be supposed that Adam was a stranger to the dignity of his own nature; but rather that, if his benign creator had made no revelation of *himself*, or had given him no intimations of the excellency of that nature, so vastly superior to, and so eminently distinguished from that of all other earth-made creatures; yet his own bright and unsullied intellects would have immediately led him to contemplate his own *wonderful make*, and to a dis-

discovery of the blessedness he stood possessed of. Therefore, agreeable to our former reasoning on the preceding head, Adam would necessarily conceive, when it was said unto him, *in the day, thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*, that his disobedience would be attended with the forfeiture and a deprivation of the *life*, or *lives*, he then possessed, and which his obedience would eternally secure unto him. Nor could any thing less be intended in the threatening against disobedience, *thou shalt surely die*; than a death opposed to the lives possessed, or possible to be possessed, in consequence of obedience. That bodily death was included in the penalty has been proved already; and that spiritual death was equally included, will more fully appear from the following considerations.

It is said, that, *man became a living soul*, this *life* man had from God, the great and gracious author of it; his spiritual life, was an immortal spark communicated by the father of spirits, the fountain of uncreated light and life; and which nothing could extinguish. Sin itself could not annihilate the soul; but being essentially contrary to the purity of it's nature, would necessarily darken and obscure the lustre of it's native brightness, and render it's being less desirable than not to be at all. On the condition of obedience, man would necessarily have enjoyed the blessings he possessed; justice itself was engaged to secure them; and on the contrary, the condition not fulfilled, justice itself must stand full against him.

Upon man's disobedience, it was not possible the union betwixt God and his soul could subsist; God's holiness would necessarily forbid it; *he is*
of

of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, much more to hold, converse, and continue in covenant and fellowship with a notorious offender. Continue in covenant he could not, the conditions and sanctions thereof being already dissolved, and broken, justice would necessarily forbid it; nor could communion and fellowship any longer subsist, since there now wanted a similarity in the nature of the parties to be united; which in this case was necessary; and an enmity in consequence of sin, had fastened upon the mind of man, and rendered it utterly impossible. Holiness, is essential to the divine nature, and the most express image of God, that can appear in any created being. The Lord exhorts his people to holiness, saying, *be ye holy, for I am holy; and without holiness, no man shall see the Lord*. The highly favoured servants of God, when admitted in pleasing vision, to view the heavenly worshippers and hear their ascriptions of glory and honor to the eternal King; they sung in sweet responses, *holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty*. Is. vi. 3. Rev. iv. 8. Now sin and disobedience, being the very reverse of this, can no more be mixed together with it, or stand before it approved and accepted, than darkness can be mixed in the body of the sun, or find a place of existence in his meridian beams. And as spiritual life, or the life of the soul, consists in an union with, and the enjoyment of God; so the dissolution of this union, and the deprivation of that enjoyment, is what we mean by spiritual death; and which must necessarily be inflicted on Adam, in consequence of his sin.

Again, the righteous law of God, must needs
pass

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pass a sentence of condemnation against the offender, suitable to the nature of the offence; but the offence was principally of a spiritual kind, viz. pride, presumption, ingratitude, &c. of which the eating the interdicted fruit was but the visible expression; or to use the words of the apostle James, *Lust when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin*, Ch. i. 15. Therefore the sentence of the law principally respected the soul. Besides, the law of God is founded upon the essential attributes of holiness and justice, and is a transcript of them; so that these are seen in the perfect law, as objects appear and are seen in a glass; and as the cherubim, and flaming sword, guard and keep the way, of the tree of life; so the divine holiness and justice, preserve and keep the law; from all inflexibility, mutability, or shadow of turning: and the former must change their nature, before the latter can acquit an offender, or mitigate it's rigor.

Again, that spiritual death is inflicted as the punishment of sin, the many declarations in the word of God, against sinners, will evince. It has been affirmed by some, that the promises, and threatenings, contained in the old testament, have no respect unto spiritual things; and that the people of the Jews had no certain knowledge of a future state; and would support their opinion by Paul's words to Timothy, *who hath brought life and immortality to light*, inferring from hence, that the soul's immortality, rested upon uncertain conjectures, till it was revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. But this notion seems to have gained acceptance, through inattention to the word of God; in which, the belief of the immortality

lity of the soul, appears to have been received, not as a thing barely possible, or which had some signs of probability; but as a matter of the greatest certainty, in the earliest ages of the world. If this be not granted, the account Moses has given of Enoch's translation, will be hard to reconcile; for if Moses did not firmly believe an after state; to say, that *Enoch walked with God, and that God took him*; would be, in effect to say, Enoch was a better man than most or all in his day, he feared God, and did the things that pleased him; and therefore the Lord inflicted upon him the heaviest judgment, that his nature was capable of suffering, even death; for he took him out of the land of the living, and deprived him of all the blessings and benefits peculiar to his only period of existence. And Enoch himself who lived long before Moses, looked by faith beyond the utmost bounds of time, when he prophesying, said, *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, &c.* Jude xiv. Nor could Paul have placed Enoch with any propriety amongst his list of worthies who atchieved the noblest deeds by faith; had he supposed Enoch an infidel in this particular; neither would it have comported with the apostle's design in the chapter, which was to encourage the Hebrews to firmness of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by the example of the saints of God in all ages. Of whom, says he, *having seen the promises afar off, they were persuaded of them.* But to return from this digression, (which here seemed necessary to be made;) as the doctrine of the soul's immortality, appears to have been received in the first ages of the world; it can hardly be supposed that the manifestations

festations of the divine displeasure against sin, could be deemed by them, to terminate in temporal judgments; and especially as the Lord did from time to time declare his detestation of sin, and his settled purpose to punish it with death.

This message the Lord sent unto his people by the prophet Ezekiel, chap. xviii. ver. 26. *When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; dieth impenitent, for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die, die spiritually, die eternally.* When Nathan the prophet commissioned by the Lord, had extorted from the king of Israel a sentence of condemnation against himself; *the man that hath done this thing shall surely die;* and the prophet applied the sentence, to the guilty monarch's heart; *thou art the man,* he trembling and confounded said, *I have sinned against the Lord,* to whom with healing, heart-reviving words, the prophet said, *the Lord hath put away thy sin;* for which, thou didst deserve to be disinherited of thy portion in heaven, and to be deprived of the comforts of his presence, and the light of his countenance upon earth; but, *thou shalt not die.* The Lord will not withdraw his spirit from thee, nor suffer thee in thy fall, to be utterly cast down, but will yet uphold thee with his hand. It is not to be doubted, but that David conceived of himself at this time as obnoxious to spiritual death; even that, which consists in a deprivation of the light of God's countenance, and the comforts of his spirit; hence in his penitential psalm, composed under an afflicting sense of his sin; he earnestly deprecates the punishment his sin had deserved, *cast me not*

away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me. Ver. 11.

As we have good authority to affirm, that many promises in the old testament were not only of a temporal nature, but had respect unto spiritual benefits and blessings; so by a just way of reasoning, we infer, that many of the threatenings were also of a spiritual nature. As the Almighty could not but intend, that the people should conceive of his threatenings against their disobedience, to have respect unto the whole man, and thereby signify his highest displeasure against sin; so it is not to be doubted, but that the prophets whom the Lord sent to bear his messages to them, spoke in language plain and easy to be understood; giving them to know by repeated assurances, that the Lord would render to the disobedient indignation, and wrath, tribulation, and anguish, both upon jew and gentile.

I proceed to shew 3dly, that death eternal was also included in the threatening, *thou shalt die*, and was the desert of disobedience. I conceive, that which has been commonly called *eternal death*, and that which I here mean by that phrase; to be no other, than spiritual death perpetuated through an endless duration; together with what has been called the *pæna sensus*, or the punishment of sense, consisting in what the scripture calls the unquenchable fire, &c. That this penalty of eternal death, was included in the sanction of the prohibition, appears from the truth of the last proposition; *that* being proved, *this* cannot be disproved, for these reasons: 1. The soul cut off from the enjoyment of God, must needs be miserable, and having no spiritual union, or communion, with him

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him, must needs be left in a state helpless and forlorn; not only wanting power to perform any thing, by which, it might be restored to his favor; but also wanting a will to perform; having no taste, no relish, for the works of holiness, nor love, nor desire, towards God, the author of it's happiness. Now the reason of the soul's separation from God, (being sin) must continue to be a reason for it's separation for ever; seeing it is not possible the soul can cease to sin, without God.

2d. Not only open acts of disobedience offend against the perfect love; but want of that love and cordial affection, which the creature owes to its creator, as the greatest good, is also a violation of it. But such love and affection are intirely inconsistent with that enmity which sin has introduced into the sinner's nature; therefore he necessarily goes on to sin, even while he suffers for it; and new accessions of guilt continually expose him to sufferings suitable thereto, *ad infinitum*.

3d. As the separation of the soul from God, is a consequence necessarily resulting from the divine purity; and by which, it suffers (at least) what some have called the (*pæna damni*) or the punishment of loss; nothing but a change in the nature of sin, or the nature of holiness, (both which are impossible) can prevent *this kind* of punishment from being eternal.

4th. Nor does the justice of God less than his holiness, require the sinner's punishment to be eternal, in *that part* thereof, which is called the punishment of sense; as appears from various passages in the new testament. *If thy hand offend thee, cut it off, it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched.* There-

fore must burn eternally. *Where their worm dieth not,* the guilty, accusing, condemning, and tormenting conscience, *and the fire is not quenched,* but must burn with an inextinguishable flame, and prey upon the offender with inconceivable rage, for ever and ever. Mark ix. 43. &c. compared with Matt. v. 29. 18. 8. Rev. xiv. 11. It appears from these, with various other scriptures that might be adduced, that sin, and disobedience, will be punished with eternal misery; and as the judge of all the earth will certainly do right, we must conclude such suffering to be the due desert of sin.

That a punishment, consisting in a most distressing and soul-piercing reflection, of a loss, so irretrievable, and immensely great; should torment and rack the soul, is not at all to be wondered at; since reflection, is essential to it's nature, and must be commensurate with it's existence. Nor should it be esteemed more strange, that a punishment, consisting in torments the most exquisite, and pungent, should be inflicted on the body, suited to it's nature; seeing man is a compound creature, and as such, he sinned against God; therefore as such, it seems equitable that he should suffer. And as sin, though committed by a finite creature, injures an infinite law, affronts infinite majesty, and slights infinite goodness; it is undoubtedly just, it should be punished with infinite punishment.

I now come in the 3d place to observe, that agreeable to those words, *in the day, thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,* the penalty was inflicted the same day, that Adam sinned against his God, and fell thereby from his form and favour.

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This will appear, by carefully noting the several transactions of that awful day, as delivered to us by the holy spirit's amanuensis, the man Moses. As disobedience, pride, ingratitude, or whatever other hellish flame enkindled by the serpent, the devil, constituted, and aggravated the killing crime, first had a place in the soul; so the punishment, which was inseparably connected with the guilt, was first inflicted on the soul. Hence we are informed, ver. vii. that having eaten, *their eyes were opened, and they knew they were naked*; bodily eyes they had before to see with, and unhappy for them they had made a bad use of them, in gazing lustfully on the tree, which it was dangerous to look unto at all, as the event made manifest. But now the eyes of their consciences were opened, their hearts smote them for what they had done; and they saw, shocking sight! what had been well for them never to have seen; they saw, *they knew that they were naked*. They *saw* their folly, but it was too late; the daring impious deed is done, it cannot be recalled. They *saw* the state of peace and tranquility, they had fallen from; and oh, heart-cutting sight! they *saw* no way, no means how to restore themselves. Doubtless, they now *saw* the subtle serpent, the hellish victor triumphing in their ruin; and worst of all they *saw* their God, their friend and benefactor, now offended with them, and his glorious image departed from them. *They knew that they were naked*, that they were stripped of all their paradisaical glory, their joys, their comforts, and innocent delights were now no more; but guilty shame, fear, and distraction seized upon them both; and all those streams of spiritual

consolation, from whence they had formerly drank large and refreshing draughts, were now dried up; and he that was wont to comfort their souls, was now far from them. As a man rejoices to see his friend, they had (no doubt) 'till this rejoiced to meet their God, under the shady bower; and with hearts glowing with gratitude and love, received the blessings which his bounteous hand bestowed; but now, see the dire effects of sin! *they heard the voice of the Lord God*, the voice which, used to charm the listening ear, more than the softest powers of music; but now, more dreadful than a clap of loudest thunder; it wounds the guilty heart. These wicked flee, when none pursue, and vainly try to hide their naked bodies with a covering of fig-leaves; and their guilty heads amongst the trees of the garden.

Thus shame, and fear, the constant concomitants of guilt, fasten on the conscience in the very act of sin, and distress the soul; Adam now knew good and evil, life and death. The good he had enjoyed in the divine favour was lost for ever, and evil like an overflowing deluge broke in upon him; God had breathed into him the breath of lives; but now sad experience tells him, the life of his soul was gone; for the life-giving spirit of his kind creator had now departed from him. With God is the *fountain of life*; but now sin had sealed fast the fountain, and all the vital streams that flowed from it were cut off; and man that a little before, had been so distinguishably dignified, and highly *honored*, *continued not* in that state, but *became like the beasts that perish*; the divine life was extinguished in him, the divine image depart-

ed from him, and he felt in *the day*, the dismal day of disobedience, that in his soul he died.

2d. When the righteous judge had summoned the offenders to his bar, and had convicted them out of their own mouths; he proceeds to pass the solemn sentence; which as it had respect unto bodily death, was delivered in these words. *Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it, cursed is the ground for thy sake;* “ in blessing thee, all created things were blessed with thee, and because “ of thee. The ground had received a command, “ and a power pursuant, to yield thee a rich supply of all things necessary for thy food, without thy care and toil; thou shouldest have gathered life and immortality from every flower “ of the field, nor brier, nor pricking thorn, nor “ dry and barren lands throughout thy extensive “ dominions should ever have been known. But “ now, the curse and death, thou hast deserved “ and art obnoxious to, shall fall upon the whole “ creation with thee, and because of thee; yea, “ *cursed is the ground for thy sake;* which shall “ be so far from yielding it’s free increase for thy “ supply; that thou shalt labour and till it in the “ sweat of thy face, but almost in vain. Thou “ shalt not any longer eat from the life-giving “ trees, and herbs of this happy garden; but, “ *thou shalt eat the herb of the field,* produced “ and made to grow with incessant toil and industry. *Thorns and thistles shall the ground “ subjected to the curse, bring forth to thee,* sad “ emblem of thy barren wretched soul; and in “ *sorrow shalt thou eat of it, until thou return* “ unto

“ *unto it.* Thy body was indeed created of the
 “ dust of the earth, but hadst thou been obedient,
 “ would have been incorruptible, and immortal,
 “ such was my will and word; but henceforth it
 “ is subject to mortality; the seeds are already
 “ sown, which in spite of all thy skill to pre-
 “ vent, will grow up to an harvest of corruption;
 “ my unalterable decree shall make the sentence
 “ firm, for *dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt*
 “ *return.*”——Pursuant to this decree, and aw-
 ful declaration; we are presented in chap. v. with
 a long bill of mortality; wherein we see the cer-
 tain fulfillment of those words, *unto dust shalt thou*
return; and the seeds of mortality sown in the hu-
 man nature, in the very pronounciation of the
 stedfast decree; had, although by a slow, and
 silent, yet by a sure, and certain growth, been
 ripening for corruption, even in Adam and these
 his sons.

Hence it appears to little purpose, that some
 have objected against the truth of what God had
 threatened; and that because Adam lived to the
 age of nine hundred and thirty years; therefore
 the penalty was not inflicted according to the time
 spoken of *in the day*, since he lost the divine and
 spiritual life *ipso facto*, in the very commission of
 the crime; and his body in the same day was dead
 by the law of God, and by the sentence of his
 judge; and as certainly subjected to corruption,
 as if his dusty tabernacle had immediately drop-
 ped into it's primitive particles.

Let not stubborn sinners presume, and because
 vengeance appears not to be executed speedily on
 an offender, conclude that God is too merciful to
 punish, and too great and high to regard what is
 trans-

transacted among the sons of men ; for he is just and holy, and will by no means clear the guilty.

I should now proceed to the fourth thing proposed, but must beg leave to postpone the enlarging on that, and the following proposition, to another opportunity. And what has already been spoken to, let us try to make some improvement of. And in order to this, I I would for a moment, call back your thoughts into the happy garden ; a place of happiness while God was there, but no longer ; his presence only makes a paradise ; and without this it would be hell in heaven. How should we then prize and value the place where the Lord has promised to be present ; holy David knew so well what happiness was with him, that *I had rather, said he, be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness.* Let us therefore cleave unto him with full purpose of heart, let us ever be found in his house, together with his people, that we may rejoice before him, and give to him the glory due unto his name. While we live under the smiles of heaven, the frowns of earth-born creatures can never hurt us ; if we are at peace with God, we need not be discouraged although the powers of earth and hell should be at war with us ; and while our eyes are fixed upon the great author of our being, and our hearts are bowed in obedience to his precepts, nothing shall be able to harm us, or make us afraid.—But O my brethren, learn an instructive lesson from the miscarriage of our common father. God had said unto him, *in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die* ; the devil in the serpent contradicts it, and says, *ye shall not die*, now whom should Adam have be-

believed? The God of truth, or the father of lies? The answer is given in the fatal consequence. Hence we should learn to look upon, and reject every saying, every doctrine, every thing, or thought, that contradicts the word of God, as devilish and dangerous; no fair enticing fruit of sin because it is goodly in our eyes to look upon, should tempt us to taste or touch it, lest we die; it is forbidden fruit. No soothing, flattering speeches; no fair, and pleasing promises, should beguile our hearts, or lead us to put forth our hands to any accursed thing.

Again, we are not in paradise, but are driven out by the righteous sentence of the judge of all the earth; and if the tempter entered there, have we not much greater reason to suppose he lies in wait to seduce and draw away our hearts from God? Yea we are assured he does, for *the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about seeking whom he may devour*. It is not certain to us, whether Adam before his fall, had any knowledge that such an enemy would lie in wait to destroy him; and therefore not suspecting any harm, where all was very good, might the more easily fall by the temptation: but we have fair warning given us, we know that we have an adversary who is wily as a serpent to beguile and seduce; fierce as a lion to tear and destroy; and desirous of our ruin as the roaring lion of its prey.

Let us therefore be always on our guard, forewarned, fore-armed. Adam might suppose himself at peace with all created beings, and in a land of safety; but we, (I speak of true believers) have openly declared war against the devil, and all the powers of darkness, and are while in the body, in
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an enemy's country. We have need therefore to advert to the apostle's advice, and *put on the whole armour of God*; we have not only *flesh and blood* to conflict with, but *principalities, and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places*. We are utterly unable to cope with the God of this world; we have no wisdom, or might to go out against so formidable a foe; *without Jesus Christ we can do nothing*; faith only, can be a shield for us, against the force of satan, and defend us from his fiery darts.

2d. Permit me to remind you of the misery and ruin brought upon our common parents, by their sin; that we through grace may avoid the rock on which they split, and having the blessed spirit for our pilot, may safely ride out all the storms of life, and before a gale of all-atoning merit, may at last be brought with gladness to the peaceful port. When coming from the hands of God, how beautiful, how fair! *Behold all was very good*; man was made in the image of God, God cannot but love his image; and whom God loves must needs be happy. But no sooner did sin get a place in the heart, by which the hand is directed to take from the forbidden tree; but the flower of their beauty, immediately faded, the glorious image of their maker, which rendered them amiable in his eyes, was totally defaced; and the happiness they enjoyed under the smiles of his countenance, quickly departed from them. Learn we from hence the odiousness of sin; it stamps upon the soul, the image of the devil, *enmity against God*. A man by sin degenerates into a beast, hence the scripture calls them dogs and swine; and the creatures God had made for his
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own glory ; by sin, defile their nature, and dishonor their creator. And as we can enjoy no happiness but so far as we enjoy God, sin cuts off our union and communion with him, and renders us miserable even in this world. When Adam had sinned, he feared ; therefore if we desire to lift up our heads with any degree of boldness either here or hereafter in the presence of our God, let us beware of sin ; there is nothing makes so many cowards as sin, the greatest bravado, will either hide his face and be afraid of God's *judgments* in this world, or desire to be buried under huge rocks and mountains in the world to come, for fear of the Almighty's indignation. O think, my brethren, what our guilty parent felt, when he hid himself in the garden amongst the trees ; and what he feared, when the Lord God said, *Adam where art thou?* Sin you see exposes us to present misery and fear of worse ; and who can conceive ? (God forbid we should ever experience) what weight of woe, what seas of sorrow, sin will plunge and immerse the sinner in through endless ages.

3d. To conclude,---While we see the essential attributes of the deity, his justice, and his holiness, necessarily inflicting on the sinner, the death his sin deserved ; let none of us imagine, that we may sin with impunity ; God must change his nature, e'er sin can pass unpunished. It will help you little that put forth your hands to sin, to talk of God being merciful ; he is not more merciful than just ; and whilst the justice of God calls out for satisfaction, the holiness of God, rejects the polluted creature. In a word, for what we have done amiss, let us come in the way God has

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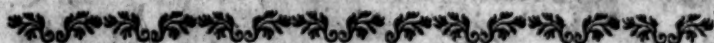
has appointed, to find favour and forgiveness with him; there, my brethren, is our cure, look unto Jesus. Does justice make demands we are not able to answer? The blood of an immaculate Lamb shall speak for us, *it speaketh better things than that of Abel.* Does the holiness of God reject us? Jesu's righteousness shall gain us acceptance; this imputed, renders us amiable in the eyes of our God, while his good spirit renews our hearts, and his grace the predominant principle in our souls *reigns in us through righteousness to everlasting life.*

S E R-





S E R M O N II.



G E N E S I S ii. 17.

*For in the day that thou eatest thereof,
thou shalt surely die.*

IT becomes us to give all attention to the holy scriptures, and labour with the utmost diligence, to settle in our hearts without a doubt, the divine credibility thereof; considering them as the living oracles of truth, and not in any part, nor in any wise, the writings of fallible men. If we firmly believe our bible to be the word of God, and that every thing contained therein, is stamped with the seal of divine veracity, and enforced with the solemn sanction, *thus saith the Lord*; it will necessarily beget in us more attention to what it contains; and if we have any love to God, to love and prize it in proportion. When we can banish from our minds all doubts and distrusts concerning the divine original of the sacred scriptures; we are then delivered from acarping and quarreling spirit, with any thing we find in them, not easy to reconcile; as concluding that the God of truth, can possibly be guilty of no falsehood, or contradiction; and whatever seems

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seems to us irreconcilable must be charged to our ignorance and want of penetration in divine things. Moreover when we conceive of the holy scriptures, as intirely dictated by the Holy Ghost; we are led to see the necessity of coming untaught to these divine tutors; that we may from them, and not from our own wild and extravagant notions, receive instruction, what to believe and what to practice, agreeable to the will of God. And it appears the more necessary for us, to be well established in the belief of God's word; because the devil will always labour to obtrude and impose upon us, something contrary to, or differing therefrom; an example of this, and the sad effects of it, we have seen in the foregoing discourse on this subject. And so far as this spirit of lies and falshood can influence the minds of natural men, (and the scriptures inform us this is not a little. Eph. ii. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 26.) so far we may suppose also that they will contradict, gainsay, and boldly arraign infinite wisdom and truth at the fallacious and deceitful bar, of their own shallow understandings; and their minds being blinded by his delusive sophistry and cunning; they are led on by the clue of their own dark reasoning, to look upon and treat the scriptures of truth with the same unlicensed liberty, as they treat the writings of their fellow mortals.

It should be remembered by us, that if the scriptures are really the words, which God has caused to be written in a book, to be received by his creatures, as a directory for their faith and practice; that so far as we pass by, and neglect them, so far, we contemn, and slight the authority that imposed them, and the goodness that vouchsafed
such

such a lanthorn to our feet, and a light for our paths. Yea moreover, as this book contains many things, to be received by us, as matters of fact, upon the faithfulness and veracity of the relator; so far as we discredit, and doubt of the truth thereof, so far, we call the divine veracity in question, *and make God a liar*. Besides, when we depart from the word of God, and either attend to, and prefer the fallible writings of men, or follow our own private judgment; we act no less imprudently than the man who going on a journey in an unknown country, resolves to travel by the light of a candle, rather than the light of the sun. As such conduct, would not only reflect on a man's soundness of mind, but also expose his body to manifold perils; so our similar conduct, in refusing to take the word of God, to be our constant companion, instructor, and guide; not only reflects on the soundness of our judgment; but exposes us to dangers of the most awful kind. For as *a man that walks in darkness knows not whither he goes*; so we, without the word of God, are left to stumble on the dark mountains of false conception, and like the men of Sodom to *weary ourselves* in a labyrinth of probabilities and conjectures, but can never find the *door* of deliverance.

But I must no longer detain you here, and my reasons for doing it so long, are because all our sermons on every subject, should be built upon this foundation; and *if any man speak not according to this rule, there is no light in him*.

Having shewn in the preceding part of this discourse, that *by sin came death*, on the first man, and common parent of us all; I now, as was pro-

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proposed, proceed to prove, that all his posterity are guilty through *this* his transgression.

The first argument I shall make use of in establishing this important point, on which, all the doctrines of the gospel have their dependance, shall be that of Adam's being a public person, and acting in a public capacity. And let us remember in this constitution, it does by no means become *us*, to call the divine procedure in question, nor with too much liberty and uncontrollable freedom, to enquire into it. It argues not the greatest loyalty in a subject, to enquire too scrupulously into the affairs of his prince; nor does it bespeak the best disposition in a servant to pry inquisitively into his master's business; much less does it become us poor worms to dispute, and call in question that almighty being who *giveth not account of any of his matters*, Job. xxxiii. 13. and whose judgment and proceedings we are sure are agreeable to truth and equity. And if any thing appears in the declarations of his word, or the disposal of his providence, that seems not perfectly agreeable to our notions, we should not cry out against God, *thy ways are not equal*, lest we should be silenced and confounded, in hearing Him declare, *that our ways are unequal*.

That Adam is to be looked upon as a public person, and as the natural head of his posterity, transacting many things in which they were equally concerned with himself; will appear from several things spoken to, and concerning him; which could by no means terminate in him. 1st, When God had created man, Ch. i. ver. 27. *be blessed them, and said be fruitful and multiply, &c.* ver. 28th, it is presumed, the power of propa-

gation was communicated by virtue of this word; and I suppose it will not be denied, that his posterity continue to propagate their species, not from a repetition of the same word to individuals, but in consequence of that spoken to Adam, as their representative. 2d. And God said, *Behold I have given unto you every herb, &c. to you it shall be for meat*; now as this grant, or any thing like it, is not renewed to individuals; by what right do we, or any of our fellow-mortals take the herbs of the field, &c. if not in consequence of that grant to Adam, and his posterity as considered in him? 3d. When the Almighty had formed a creature for his own glory, and planted a garden of pleasure, for the happiness of that creature; he saw something yet wanting, according to his great idea, to compleat it's felicity; which deficiency he signified in these words. *It is not good that man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him*; accordingly it is said, ver. 22d, that, *when the Lord God had formed the woman, he brought her to the man*. This is what one might call the first marriage, and is evidently of divine institution, Jehovah himself being presenter and priest. And we have the best authority to affirm, that this ordinance equally respected Adam and all his seed; for it follows, *therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh*; which saying, as attested by our blessed Saviour, has respect unto all men. Matt. xix. 5. 4th, I know no law extant in all the old testament, which commands a woman to be obedient to her husband, except what is recorded Gen. iii. 16. *And thy desire shall be to thy husband; and he shall rule over thee,*
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this is by the apostle Paul called a law, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, and by virtue thereof, he exhorts the woman to subjection. Now it is evident, all these things affect his posterity, either as he is their natural, or their foederal head.

Again, it is equally certain, that Adam is to be looked upon, as the representative of his posterity in a covenant relation, or as their foederal head; and in this view; whatever was made to Adam by promise, and became awardable by obedience, the condition of that promise; would doubtless (the condition being performed) have devolved to his posterity; nor would any one have thought it injustice, to have enjoyed the blessing. On the contrary, as Adam's disobedience has involved his posterity under the curse, the event cannot alter the justice of the proceeding. Besides, as Adam represented his posterity, as their natural head, and in that capacity had several grants and injunctions common to both; it is reasonable, that whatsoever was granted by way of covenant, and was to be continued on condition of obedience, should also respect both. Nor is it any uncommon thing amongst men, bearing such relation, natural, or foederal, as has been spoken of; to be benefited, or injured, in consequence of the conduct of those, to whom they stand related.

That Christ the second Adam represented his people in a foederal relation, will hardly be denied; at least by those, who pay any regard to the holy scriptures, seeing that both in the old and new testament he is often spoken of in this character. And as the opposition between the first and second Adam is beautifully stated, and

judiciously, and plainly treated by Paul in Rom. v. 15. &c. it follows that in the conception of him, who had been taught these grand truths in the third heaven; *what* Jesus the second Adam was to the people whom he represented, *that* was the first Adam, to the people whom he represented, even all mankind. Hence it is, that in ver. 15th, *if through the offence of one, even the first Adam; many be dead; much more the grace of God, which is by one man, even Jesus Christ, the second Adam, and the gift by grace, even life and immortality, hath abounded unto many.* If Jesus Christ is thus appointed, and set forth in scripture, as the covenant head of his people; and if they obtain life, and salvation for the sake of his merits only; (a truth, which in this place I shall take for granted,) then there can no imputation of injustice lye against the divine procedure in rendering a reward due to the demerit of Adam, solely for his sin, to his posterity. When Moses the servant of God had summoned the people of Israel, to remind them of the manifold mercies they had been partakers of, and to signify the Lord's pleasure furthermore concerning them, he thus addresses the numerous assembly; "ye stand
 " this day all of you, before the Lord your God;
 " your captains of your tribes, your elders, and
 " your officers with all the men of Israel, your
 " little ones and your wives, &c. that thou
 " shouldest enter into a covenant with the Lord
 " thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord
 " thy God maketh with thee this day, &c. nei-
 " ther with you only do I make this covenant
 " and this oath, but with him that standeth here
 " with us this day, before the Lord our God,
 " and

“and also with him that is not here with us this day.” Now when we see the Lord entering into a covenant with Adam, where is the absurdity of supposing him to speak in like terms, “Not only with thee who art here to-day, but also with them that are not here with thee this day, do I make this covenant.”

If there be any of you that yet dare to inveigh and exclaim against the justness of this procedure; I would answer such in the words of an eminent divine and servant of Jesus Christ. “What mortal now can flatter himself, that placed in the same circumstances with Adam he would have better consulted his own interest? Adam was neither without wisdom, nor holiness, nor a desire after true happiness, nor an aversion to the miseries denounced by God against the sinner; nor in fine, without any of those things, by which he might expect to be upon his guard against all sin: and yet he suffered himself to be drawn aside by the craft of a flattering seducer. And dost thou iniquitous censurer of the ways of the Lord, presume thou wouldst have better used thy free-will? Nay, on the contrary all thy actions cry aloud, that thou approvest, that thou art highly pleased with, and always takest example from that deed of thy first parent, about which thou so unjustly complaineest. For when thou transgressest the commands of God, when thou settest less by the supreme being than by thy lusts, when thou preferrest earthly to heavenly things, present to future, when, by thine own choice, thou seekest after happiness, but not that which is true; and instead of taking the right way, goest into by-

“ paths ; is not that the very same as if thou didst
 “ so often eat of the forbidden tree ? Why then
 “ dost thou presume to blame God for taking a
 “ compendious way, including all in one ; well
 “ knowing, that the case of each in particular,
 “ when put to the test, would have proved the
 “ same.” *Witsius.*

It seems when man's munificent creator had given him his being, and had exalted him to the dignity of lord of the lower world ; that he (the great creator) considered all the works of creation as constituting the one great family, of which man was appointed the head ; and on whose conduct depended their continuance in that fair and peaceful state in which they were created, and which in the judgment and esteem of the great architect and oeconomist was *very good*. Therefore, when man the head of this family had offended, the whole became obnoxious through his offence ; not only the children that should be born of his body were subjected to the curse, but also the beasts of the field, and the very ground on which he stood. This appears from God-Almighty's sentence, in that awful day of trial, and his righteous procedure is not to be called in question. *Unto the serpent he said, because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above allcattle, (Miccol) more than all ;* if all cattle were not cursed together with the serpent, the comparative (*Mem*) might appear to be without meaning in this place ; and it would have been sufficient to have said, *Thou art cursed*, without respect to *every beast of the field*, had these been exempted, quite exempted from the curse. So provoking and displeasing to God was this act of man's disobedience, that for his sake

fake, the ground itself is cursed; *curfed is the ground for thy fake, thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to thee.* So defiled was man by sin, that nothing pure, nothing undefiled could bear his touch; but like the loathsome leper, his very garments spread the contagion, and the breath of his nostrils infected the lower world.

This curse upon the whole creation, is probably what the great apostle has an eye to, Rom. viii. 19. *&c. the creature was made subject to vanity not willingly; the creature, the whole frame of nature, especially this lower world, both sensible and inanimate, as constituting the one creation, or creature of the almighty's hand, was made subject to vanity; became mutable and mortal; contracted an impurity, being sullied and stained in every part, lost that perfection of beauty so pleasing to him that formed it, and became deformed by the sin and disobedience of it's appointed lord. Not willingly, the creature had no hand in Adam's transgression, was no coadjutor in his sin, yet for his sake, as being part of his family, was subjected to the curse by the judicial sentence of the righteous judge; yet still desiring, and longing for it's first and perfect state, it is subjected in hope, waiting and expecting with groans and bitter travel, the manifestation of the sons of God.* Awful sight! Enough to fill our hearts with pity, and our faces with shame and blushing; to see birds and beasts, fishes, and creeping things; together with all the inanimate parts of the creation, suffering for our sins, and subject to vanity for our egregious folly and disobedience. Man sinned, the creature suffers; yet man denies what the whole creation feels, and
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with a mournful voice of ceaseless lamentation loudly declares.

Seeing then that all the creation suffered in consequence of Adam's sin, why should we attempt to exculpate the offender, or acquit his posterity from that guilt brought on the (otherwise) innocent creation through his disobedience? Why should the ground be cursed, the cattle, and beasts of the field, and the whole family of Adam be subject to vanity, and his sons be exempt? If we are bold enough to affirm it to be unjust in God, to charge the guilt of Adam's sin upon his posterity, and punish as offenders in him, all that proceed from him; what shall we say of God's proceedings in this case? Doubtless his ways are equal, and his judgment according to truth; and our proneness to quarrel with his proceedings, does but produce a stronger argument of our fallen and depraved condition.

It is a settled maxim, that every effect is dependant upon, and owes its being to some cause, manifest, or latent; and we never scruple to allow the certain and necessary existence of the one, when we cannot but acknowledge the being of the other. Now when we see the creation subject to vanity, mutation, and mortality; and man, that was made lord of the lower world, subject to sorrow, sufferings and death; we must necessarily infer, there is some cause, by which such lamentable effects have been produced; and if this stream be traced backward to it's fountain, we, shall doubtless find it to be sin; for one may venture to affirm, had there been no sin, there would have been no suffering, and guilt is as essential to sin, as light and heat are to the sun.

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The scripture account of the state of men and things after the fall, may be adduced as a farther confirmation of this awful and important truth. When Adam was created, a place of pleasure, a paradise, was prepared for his habitation; and here he continued until sin procured his expulsion from thence; this was part of the punishment inflicted upon him for his disobedience, he was driven from the garden of God, which had been wont to yield it's fruit in abundance for his support, to seek for food in the open uncultivated field, and to *eat his bread in the sweat of his brow*. Adam thus exiled from his God and King, began to propagate his race, for, *he knew his wife, and she conceived, and bare Cain and his brother Abel*; these children were not born in paradise, nor had a place assigned them there, as Adam and Eve their parents had, when in their perfect state; but were banished from that blissful habitation that suited a state of innocence, together with their offending parents. From this we may observe, first, had they been innocent, and not considered as guilty through the offence of their parents, it is by no means probable they would have been exposed to that toil and labour, which was the effect of their parent's transgression; but the effect is evident, therefore the cause cannot with a good countenance be denied. 2d. Another reason why Adam was driven from the garden, was, *lest he should put forth his hand, and take of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever*. We do not find that Adam before he sinned was prohibited the fruit of this life-giving tree, for *of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat*, that one excepted; and why should not his posterity be as highly favoured, if

as holy, and free from all imputation of guilt as Adam was? But it appears that all kind of sufferings that Adam brought upon himself by his sin, the like sufferings all his posterity are subjected to, and as the same effects must be the produce of one and the same cause, so the sufferings of Adam's sons, owe their existence to that one cause, Adam's sin.

Moses the man of God tells us, that Adam after his fall *begat a son in his own likeness*; it would be a reflection on the great historian not to be admitted, to suppose him intending to inform us by this declaration, what none of his readers could doubt of; namely, that *a man begat a man*, seeing this was no other than the natural effect of the divine institution and injunction, *be fruitful and multiply*. He had informed us chap. i. ver. 27. *that God created man in his own image*, that is, he further adds, *in the image of God*, this image of God in which Adam was created, was three-fold, 1. In his nature and constitution; his body was formed of the dust of the ground, and could be said to be in the image of God no otherwise, than as the creator of all things was pleased to mould it after the image of his great idea, and in the form in which he liked to manifest himself when he would assume the human nature; but his soul was spiritual in it's nature and after the image of God, *for God is a spirit*; his soul was immortal, therefore in the image of him who only hath immortality, as in the source and fountain thereof. 2. He bore the image of God, in the authority given him over the creatures of this lower world, *let them said God, have dominion, &c.* so that as God rules the armies of the sky, and all the hosts
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of heaven; man should resemble him, being his vice-roy, and rule the inferior creatures of the earth. 3d. Man was made in God's image of purity and rectitude; righteousness and holiness are said by the apostle to be the image of God, Eph. iv. 24. and this image fair and spotless, was impressed upon the soul of man in his first creation, and answered to the divine original, as the impression on the wax, answers to the seal that impressed it. This is the fair and amiable picture, so exactly corresponding to the idea of the great drafts-man, that when having drawn it he approved it, and said, *all is very good*; but sin defaced, and deformed this glorious image, in Adam, and all his seed.

For Adam, as a fallen creature, began to propagate his race, and *begat a son in his own likeness*, or rather, *begat in his own likeness*, all that he did beget both sons and daughters; for *son* is not in the original; all his offspring he begat like himself, and after his own image, exiles from God, and subject to mortality, sorrow and suffering. The glorious image of rectitude and holiness was gone; integrity and innocence were intirely lost in the parent, and it was impossible he could convey to others, what he had lost the possession of in himself. His image therefore, which his posterity partake of, is a frail and feeble body, subject to pain, sickness, and manifold diseases, and lastly death itself. A soul destitute of God's spirit, of divine and spiritual light, life and comfort; averse to every good, proud and self-dependant, and prone to all manner of evil. Now as a creature so far fallen from the image of the blessed God, and so much assimilated to that spirit of darkness
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the devil, can by no means be the object of the divine complacency; wretchedness and disquietude must needs be it's portion, so long as such state of alienation continues. Hence it is written, *there is no peace saith my God to the wicked*; for he is chased by the terrors of his own conscience, and *fleeeth when no man pursueth*; and as an union with the Lord, and the comforts flowing therefrom, gives light and gladness to the heart; so a deprivation of these, exposes the soul to that tribulation and anguish, the offending parent of a ruined posterity felt, when he fled from the presence of his maker, and attempted to hide himself amidst the thickest trees of the garden. Moreover, as Adam's confession of his nakedness, was a pleading guilty before his judge; so our want of that glorious image first impressed on the human nature, and those transcendent robes of light and glory, with which it was adorned, bespeaks transgression, and declares us guilty. If our great Lord should in the rigor of his justice, and without respect to our Saviour, and surety, call us to account, as we first come into the world, for the talents committed to us in our common parent; none of us could say so much in our own behalf, as did the man in the gospel, *lo, here is thine own*, for we have nothing to present, of what God first bestowed, nor can we in justice expect to meet with better treatment than he; for justice would be glorified, in the eternal damnation of all that spring from the loins of Adam; and the salvation of any, must be ascribed to free and sovereign grace, everlasting love, and boundless mercy, flowing through the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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We have no reason to suppose, those eminent saints whom the Holy-Ghost employed as scribes, in penning the sacred scriptures, conceived any other of their natural state, even from their infancy, than a state of guiltiness and obnoxiousness to wrath; seeing many of their expressions both general and particular, clearly indicate such conceptions. Job, in the extremity of his sufferings, confessed to God the feebleness of his body, and the defilement of his soul, and acknowledged that the fountain was so exceedingly corrupt and poisoned, that nothing pure and untainted could possibly proceed from it, for, *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* saith he, *Nor one.* Nor did his friends however different from him in their sentiments in other respects, dissent from his judgment in this; for Bildad the Shuhite, supposing Job to be self-righteous, and forgetful of the *rock from whence he was born*, asks him in the presence of his friends, and with him, all that should hear the awful interrogation, *how can he be clean that is born of a woman?* The sweet finger of Israel taught by the same spirit, harmonized in the same sentiments, and when speaking of others, says, *the wicked are estranged from the womb, as soon as they be born speaking lies;* and of himself, *behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

These, with many other passages expressive of the like sentiment in holy writ, may serve to inform us what their judgment was concerning the human nature, who were most high in the favour of heaven; and it would be absurd to suppose, that while they declared this to be the state of fallen man, they should at the same time conceive him

him to be any other than a guilty creature, and obnoxious to that *wrath which is declared from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*. If we deny ourselves to be guilty creatures through the imputation of Adam's transgression, or the guilt thereof; and a corrupt and sinful nature derived from him; we shall find no little difficulty in clearing blessed Paul, of what few would care to charge inspiration with; viz. unintelligibility and inconsistency. Eph. ii. 3. He here includes himself, with all his brethren the Jews, and much more the Gentiles, who had lived atheists in the world, and says, *among whom, even the children of disobedience, spoken of in the preceding verse, we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind; and were by nature, [phusai] by generation, or birth, children of wrath; even as others*. But what can Paul mean by children of wrath, otherwise than creatures obnoxious to the divine indignation; and deserving of everlasting misery? And from whence could this desert come, if we were innocent? Where punishment is considered, as the demerit of guilt, a creature liable to the former, is supposed chargeable with the latter.

It has been already proved in our foregoing discourse, that death, &c. is the effect of sin; and if we would allow the scriptures to speak consistently, or the writers thereof intelligibly, we must acknowledge this *truth*, to be established; by the concurrent testimony, of the different parts of these writings. One might venture to rest the whole weight of the argument on this single position; *there is no suffering but in consequence of sin*; and

and as none of the human race is exempt from suffering, deduce the undeniable consequence, that none is exempt from sin. Nor is this alien, either to the language, or sentiment of scripture, as appears from the apostle Paul; *by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men (pantas anthropous,) all, of either sex, and every age, therefore little children, infants; and why? What have these done? These sinned in the loins of Adam; as much as Levi payed tithes in the loins of Abraham, therefore death passed upon them, for that they have sinned.* Rom. v. 12. *For untill the law, untill the law of God was published in Mount Sinai, by Moses the man of God, in the audience of all the tribes of Israel, sin was in the world, made it's entrance by one man, the offence of Adam, and extended it's conquest to all his posterity. And death erecting it's throne and empire, on the conquest of it's parent sin, reigned from Adam to Moses, by virtue of the covenant made in the garden of Eden, and as the penalty with which the violation of it had been threatened, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, all children that had died in their infancy, for more than two thousand years. Nor is there the least appearance of any other cause or reason suggested by this writer in this whole passage, why these infant-sufferers were punished with death, but that of sin; for by one man's disobedience, they were made, (katestatheisan,) constituted, sinners, and therefore they suffered. I shall close this head with the following observations, 1st, If we have lost nothing by the fall of Adam, as say the Socinians; then it is not to be expected*
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we should gain any thing by Christ ; between whom and Adam there is a clear and beautiful contrast in many parts of the new testament. If our blessed Saviour came into the world for no other end, and with no other design, but to leave us an example ; then, as an example of any kind, set before our eyes, is more forcible, and influential, than a bare narration of what has been transacted for this purpose : they who were eye-witnesses of the holy life, and pious death of Jesus Christ, had an advantage far superior to us, who have only heard of such a person after many ages ; and we, to those who lived before the coming of Christ, and had no example at all. No sooner had Adam sinned, than his soul was estranged from God, and he became subject to all the evil effects of sin ; and as children were born to him in this depraved condition, all will allow they would be apt to imitate him ; therefore it might seem that an example was necessary from that early age, seeing Adam himself had erred in the way to glory, there was little reason to expect he would direct his sons aright. The necessity of regeneration, is urged by our Saviour in those strong and forcible words, *except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*, and the spiritual nature of it is touched upon by his apostle Paul in that exhortation, *be renewed in the spirit of your mind* ; but if we are not fallen creatures, whose nature is impure and defiled, and whose souls are incapable of an union with God, the fountain of our happiness ; regeneration must either be an unmeaning phrase, or it's meaning must be sought for elsewhere than in the words of Christ and his apostles concerning it.

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Presuming this proposition is sufficiently clear, to all who have their minds open to conviction, I proceed to the last thing proposed, which was to prove, that there is no salvation or deliverance from death, but by Christ. This is a truth, I suppose, will scarce be doubted, if the preceding particular be admitted; for this lays and leaves the whole world under condemnation, this brings in the *whole world guilty before God*; and if all had been left to sink into the nethermost hell, beneath the indignant frown of offended majesty, it had been an act of unquestionable, and inviolable justice; while on the contrary, if any are *preserved from going down into the pit*; if any are saved from eternal ruin, it is an act of free, sovereign and boundless grace and mercy. We shall the more readily and joyfully admit this precious truth, *salvation by Christ*, when we are made truly sensible that it is not in our own power. But who shall persuade us of this? Who will discover to us this dangerous disease? *Who will believe this report*? Surely none but they *to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed*; none but such as are *convinced of sin*, by the spirit of God.

I am about, therefore, to explain and lay open this important truth before you, but it is in pursuance to those words, *preach the gospel to every creature*, and by the divine blessing upon my lame and feeble arguments, that I hope to succeed.

Are we then guilty and obnoxious creatures? Do we stand chargeable with sin original and actual? What can we do to merit favour? Suppose we were willing to be reconciled to God, which none ever will 'till made so *in the day of God's power*; for, *the carnal mind is enmity against God*;

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which way shall we set about it? *How shall we come before the Lord, and how ourselves before the most high God?* There is no law given which can give life, but administers condemnation to every offender, and thunders out the most dreadful anathemas against every sinner. If a man is convicted of murder, or any other capital crime, he knows the law can yield him no relief, to justify or acquit him, for it is the law that condemns him. Our blessed Saviour said to the Jews, *I condemn ye not, there is one that condemneth you, even Moses in whom ye trust*, that is, the law given by Moses; and this people saith Paul *attained not unto righteousness*, that righteousness which would recommend them to God, *because they sought it by the works of the law*.

If it was said of the law of the Medes and Persians, that they were unalterable, how much more must we not conceive this of the law of God, which is founded on his unchangeable nature; and if Daniel when having violated the royal decree was doomed to suffer according to this law, notwithstanding, the king set his heart to deliver him, how much more when sinful creatures have rebelled against the king of heaven, and violated his most holy law, shall they not fall under the severity of it's sentence to their eternal condemnation.

It would be absurd to suppose, that a person as abovementioned, convicted of murder, &c. under a law that sentenced every such offender to death, without any mitigation of the penalty, should be able to satisfy that law, by any other means; so we as capital offenders against God, are sentenced to death by a law that can make no pos-

possible abatement; nor acquit the offender, without suffering the penalty due to the offence. Should the sinner, deprived of the light and comforts of God's spirit, be for ever banished from his blissful presence, and shut up in the dark and dismal regions of the bottomless pit; he would suffer no more than what the law he had violated sentenced him to; and as it is impossible that he could for ever lie in hell, and yet be saved; so it is equally impossible, that a guilty sinner, obnoxious to eternal death by the righteous sentence of the law, should do any thing to procure, or merit his own salvation. In short, our case and condition is this, we are guilty creatures, and no kind of punishment, however exquisite; no duration of that punishment however long, can make us otherwise; for as eternity knows no bound, and infinity has no limitations; so that holy and inflexible law, which condemns the offender to eternal sufferings, can never say it is enough.

Again, could it be supposed, (which is absurd,) yet I say, could it be supposed, that a sinner was justly exempt from suffering, as the desert of sin; and that he stood on a like footing with Adam, in respect to a covenant *do* (or *do not*) *and live*, (which I must again observe is absurd to suppose, for the scripture knows of no covenant existing since Adam sinned in paradise, but the covenant of grace) yet one might venture to affirm, that on such condition no flesh would be saved. These following reasons will make it plain. Adam had many advantages of standing in his perfect state, and of obeying the law of God, which we have not, for first, He had a perfect nature, all the powers and faculties of his soul, and all the members and organs of his body, like a curious and

well wrought machine, when first coming from the hands of the artist; were in perfect regularity, and subserved each other in pleasing harmony, and sweet concord. This is alluded to in those scripture passages, wherein the perfection of that nature is begun to be restored by the power of renovating grace; *if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, the fruit of the spirit is in all goodness and truth.* 2. Cor. v. 17. Eph. iv. 24. &c. But with us it is the very reverse, the œconomical state of our souls and bodies, is somewhat like the anarchical state of Israel, when every man did that which was right in his own eyes; our passions are stiff and unruly, the understanding dark, the will obstinate, and the affections vitiated. The streams of corruption which proceed from the depraved and corrupt nature, and flow with greater, or less rapidity from every unrenewed heart are awfully described by the great apostle in these words, *the works of the flesh are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like;* on which description, it will be sufficient to observe, that the fruit makes fully manifest the quality of the tree. 2d. Adam lived under the smiles of his maker; the light of whose countenance fills the heart with gladness, and animates the soul to chearful obedience; but we are estranged from the womb, the intervening clouds of sin, have hid from us the light of his blessed countenance, and left us to droop under the most desponding discouragements; the law, with unabating

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ing rigor as the egyptian task-masters, exacts the full tale of perfect obedience, yet gives us no strength to perform it; this is alluded to Rom. viii. 3. *what the law could not do*, namely, give life and salvation, *in that it was weak through the flesh*, through the imperfection, and impotency of nature; that did Jesus Christ by the sacrifice of himself. 3d. When Adam first came from the hands of God, he naturally loved God, this was the law of his nature written and engraven on his heart; but we, conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, have an enmity against God; and if not in words, yet in our ways and actions say with the haughty prince, *who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice*. Now as the substance of that law, by which we could have any claim to salvation, consists in love to God, with all the soul, mind, and strength, the task is equally easy for us, to change our nature, as fulfill this righteous law. 4th. When Adam was placed in the garden of Eden, although he had a secret enemy, that was contriving his ruin; yet was he exempt from that innumerable multitude of snares and temptations, that his posterity have to cope with. He had none of those deadly struggles, with a hard and unbelieving heart, foolish and hurtful desires, which often make the christian and hero groan, and greatly agonize for victory; and before which, the unrenewed by grace are impetuously driven as before a swell of mighty waters. In our lapsed condition, we are each considered apart as a leaky vessel at sea in a storm, whose affrighted mariners are every moment expecting to sink like lead into the bottom of the raging deep; but when considered, as in society, our condition

is much more dangerous, by the additional danger of being dashed to pieces one against another. 5th, The same law that was given to Adam in his perfect state, and on which the federal law was founded; continues to us, as extensive in it's demands, as rigorous in it's exactions, and as inflexible in it's nature, under all our weaknesses, wants, and difficulties, as it was to him when fraught with every qualification adequate to the extensive precept.

And is it possible we should yet imagine that we can do something to deserve the divine favour? Can we yet think to build a Babel whose top shall reach to heaven? No, we are empty pitchers; we are enfeebled creatures; yea we are guilty hell-deserving creatures. May we have an ear open to instruction, and an heart made wise to understand, what the evangelical prophet would have us learn in those words; *wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?* He here, would call our attention from the broken cisterns of creature-comfort, to the full and overflowing fountain of uncreated goodness; and from listening to the delusive overtures of flesh and blood, to lend our willing ears to the infallible teachings of his blessed spirit.

Seeing therefore, that salvation is not attainable, no nor even damnation avoidable, by our own works, what abundant reason have we to bless God for Jesus Christ our redeemer, surety, and Saviour! What hopes could our guilty parents entertain, when arraigned at God's impartial bar, that the sentence should not be executed in it's utmost severity? How unexpected therefore must that
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that mercy be, that was manifested in the serpent's curse, and how full of consolation, the promise couched in the deceiver's doom! *it, (bu,) be* the redeemer of his people from the curse and death their sin deserved; the everlasting Son of the Father, the first and last, *Jehovah*, blessed for ever; in the fullness of time shall lay aside his glory, and assuming the human nature shall be born, the seed of the woman, whom thou hast seduced, and *shall bruise thy head*, shall deliver his lambs from thy voracious jaws, despoil thee of the power thou art permitted to possess, and drag thee conquered at his chariot wheels.

But it is now time for me to draw towards a conclusion, lest I should intrude too much upon your time, and weary out your patience. Are we then *by nature children of wrath*, guilty and obnoxious sinners? Let us then as such, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of our justly offended maker. Let us take to ourselves the shame that our sins have deserved, and let us give to the justice of God, the glory that is due in punishing the offender; and to his mercy and grace, the glory that is due in justifying, and saving the guilty.

The consequence of this doctrine is, that our salvation is left wholly in the hands of God, and none can be saved if this doctrine be true, but they must owe their salvation intirely to him. And who needs be ashamed of this consequence? Good old Jacob was not, when he said, *I have awaited for thy salvation, O Lord*, emphatically *thine*; nor was the king of Israel when in like words, he said, *I have longed for thy salvation*. For the power to save poor hell deserving sinners, is
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with God, *salvation belongs unto the Lord.* It is needless that I should particularize and point out this or that person ascribing the salvation of sinners unto God, seeing all the saints, the holy men, both under the old and new testament dispensation with one voice give God the glory of their salvation. And indeed if it were not thus, their song would be very different from that new song which is sung above; for there the whole multitude of the redeemed, whom John saw
 “ standing before the throne and before the Lamb,
 “ being clothed with white robes, and palms in
 “ their hands, they cried with a loud voice, say-
 “ ing, salvation to our God which sitteth upon
 “ the throne, and unto the Lamb.” Rev. vii.
 9. 10.

It is not at all strange, that a doctrine which lays the ax to the very root of man's pride, should be so much opposed and rejected; for we make it evident that we are no degenerate plants, but the real offspring of him, who aspiring to be as God, thereby sunk beneath the dignity conferred upon him as man; seeing we are naturally actuated by the same spirit, and are in a way little different, doing the same thing. But this doctrine leaves us wholly at the mercy of God to save us, or damn us; according to *this* no man has aught to glory in but the Lord alone, and his free grace; all *boasting is excluded*, and every saint in glory has been, and will be saved, as an helpless sinner.

Methinks upon the whole, some of you are ready to say e'er this, why this man is so far from being a messenger of peace unto us, that we hear of nothing but a dreadful and eternal war; so far from bringing us glad tidings, that he has arrested us in-
 dividually

dividually as malefactors, arraigned and sentenced us to everlasting misery; for he insists upon our being guilty, and allows us no way of exculpating or acquitting ourselves. I answer, the remark is just, we all are guilty sinners, nor is it possible to acquit ourselves; yet thanks be to God there is a Saviour, a perfect, not a partial Saviour; a Saviour not compounding with sinners, but completing the whole of their salvation by his own perfect works. Let me therefore in a few words commend this Saviour unto you.

Ye are guilty creatures, and obnoxious to eternal sufferings; are ye sensible of this? Is this the poisoned arrow that drinks up all your spirits, and drowns all your delights? Then let me address you in the words of the baptist, *behold the Lamb of God*; ye are obnoxious, but Jesus has undertaken for you the whole of your deliverance and salvation. David besought him saying, *be surety for thy servant*. Ps. cxix. 122. The Lord said, *I have laid help upon one that is mighty*. Ps. lxxxix. 19. Your sins have exposed you to everlasting sorrows, but Jesus the eternal Son of the Father, *carried our sorrows, and bare our sins, in his own body on the tree*. He engaged his heart to come near to the Lord, Jer. xxx. 21. as the high-priest of his people by his own most precious and invaluable blood; and in that exalted character he is now seated at the right hand of the majesty on high, and is a Saviour to the uttermost for all that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession.

Ye conscious sinners, let the fountain of your tears be dried up, since there is a fountain of mercy, grace, and everlasting love, opened to you

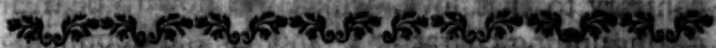
you in the side of a glorious Redeemer ; bring your ulcerous souls, your corrupt and depraved hearts ; here is the balm of Gilead ; the bloody balm of a suffering Saviour, which tried, was never yet found ineffectual. Ye need not imitate your parents in the garden, and attempt to cover your nakedness with leaves. Lo, here is a compleat garment, the righteousness of the adorable Jesus ; cloathed with *this*, ye shall stand with great boldness in the presence of those that accused you ; ornamented with *this* ye shall stand, not like Joseph before a Pharaoh, or Daniel when arrayed in royal robes ; but ye shall stand in the presence of Jehovah ; absolved from sin, purged from impurity, and cloathed in blood-bought linen, ye shall sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

S E R





S E R M O N III.



I P E T E R, ii. 24.

*Who his own self bare our Sins, in his
own Body on the Tree.*

THE principal scope of this large letter to the churches, appears to have been, a desire to establish them in those truths concerning Jesus Christ, which had already been preached unto them, and thro' the reception of which, by that faith which is the *operation of God*, they were now in the possession of a lively hope of a more glorious inheritance to be possessed hereafter. And to animate and encourage them under the various trials and afflictions, that would necessarily be the result of turning their backs on the evil customs of the world, and forsaking the paths of immoral and ungodly men; and of following Jesus the despised Nazarene in self-denied obedience, in the regeneration. In order to this, he reminds them of the everlasting love of God, in *electing* them to glory according to his foreknowledge, Ch. i. 1, 2. of the abundant mercy of God in *begetting* them again to a lively hope; of the in-

inestimable price with which they were redeemed,
 and the *incorruptible word* by which they were be-
 gotten to newness of life. The 2d Chap. is in-
 troduced with a warm and pathetic exhortation to
 brotherly love, and christian affection, which
 should first evidence itself in putting away or laying
 apart all *malice*, and every temper and disposition,
 contrary to that love, which was now to be their
 distinguishing character; and by the abounding
 of which, all men might know them to be the
disciples of the Lord Jesus. He also inculcates
 the most exalted morality, (as flowing from the
 most excellent source, and stimulated by motives
 the most powerful and persuasive,) in a conscien-
 tious discharge of every relative duty, and the
 most fervent piety; in a patient acquiescence in all
 sufferings, and a chearful resignation to all afflic-
 tions; which saith he, "ye ought the rather to
 " do, because it is thank-worthy if a man for
 " conscience towards God, endure grief, suffer-
 " ing wrongfully," and "if ye then take it pa-
 " tiently it is acceptable, grateful with God.
 " Moreover, hereunto were ye called and have
 " the most exalted pattern for patient suffering
 " set before you; for Christ also suffered for us,
 " leaving us an example that we should follow
 " his steps." And the apostle here having had
 occasion to mention Christ, immediately lays down
 his subject, and digresses from the line of his ex-
 hortation, that he might at once indulge himself,
 and edify the church, by a short but pientary de-
 scription of that great sacrifice, the body of the
 Lord Jesus Christ, "who without spot presented
 " himself to God." Of whom in the words of

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S E R M O N I I I . 61

the text, it is said, " Who his own self bare our
" sins, in his own body on the tree."

Lest any should imagine that Christ's bearing
our sins, was to be understood in a typical, or
metaphorical sense; the language of the Holy
Ghost is, *himself*, (*autos*) emphatically himself,
and not another. Sacrificial expiations had been
long in use, for, " without shedding of blood
" there was no remission." Heb. ix. 22. " but
" the law which was only a shadow of good things
" to come, and not the very image of the things
" can never with those sacrifices which they offer-
" ed year by year continually make the comers
" thereunto perfect. Heb. x. 1. But now the
Lord had prepared himself a sacrifice. Zeph. i.
17. This Jesus was the " Lamb of God that
" taketh away the sin of the world." " Bore
" our sins," lifted them up to the cross in order to
expiate them by the shedding of his blood, agree-
able to, Is. liii. 4. " he bore our griefs, and car-
ried our sorrows." To which may be referred,
John i. 29. " Behold the Lamb of God which
" taketh away the sin of the world." If it be
enquired how Christ bore our sins? We answer,
not by becoming personally a sinner, " for in
" him there was no sin, neither was guile found
in his mouth;" for an high-priest became us who
was separated from sinners; therefore that holy
thing, (*bagion*) which was born of Mary, was
emphatically called, *the Son of God*. But second-
ly, He bore our sins by imputation, 2 Cor. v.
21. " He hath made him to be sin for us, who
" knew no sin," compared with Is. liii. 4. " He
" hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows,"
ver. 6. *the Lord hath laid*, hath caused to meet
in

in him, as so many lines drawn from the periphery of a circle which coincide at the centre, to the sins of all his people in every age and place are laid on him their surety. Without controversy great is this mystery of godliness, "in him" "was no sin," yet as a sinner he suffered and that *for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* 1 Pet. iii. 18. If it should be further enquired whose sins he bore? A full and sufficient answer may be given by adverting to Ch. i. ver. 1. 2. "To the elect strangers scattered abroad." To imagine the pronoun *our* extended to, and comprehending individuals, and yet deny the consequence, universal salvation, is grossly absurd; inasmuch as the price paid was great beyond conception, and the purchased possession secured by divine veracity; for, "all that" "the Father hath given me shall come to me." John vi. 37. "And they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand, my father which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my father's hand." John x. 28, 29. *He bore our sins*, not as a nameless author on this subject affirms, with an uncommon degree of boldness: That Christ's bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, cannot clearly and consistently be understood of any other than his leaving us an example that we should follow his steps, and to confirm the truth of this monstrous hypothesis we have his strong *ipse dixit*, over and over again, without one scripture proof to support his assertion

* See a tract, entitled, "Christ's Sufferings exemplary, or the interpretation of St. Peter's Account of Christ's bearing our Sins in his own body on the tree. Printed at London, 1761.

tion; or the least regard had to the divine oracles. But blessed be God we have a more sure word of prophecy to which we shall do well to take heed. *God at sundry times and in divers manners, spake to our fathers by the prophets,* concerning the promised seed, which was held forth from age to age under various types and figures, in all which the suffering Saviour was pourtrayed, not as an exemplar, but as a *surety*. Every bleeding Lamb if rightly understood, when yielding up to death, bleated the name of Jesus, while the lowing bullock bleeding out his soul, prefigured and held forth, the vicarious sufferings of the Lamb of God. — *In his own body,* when he cometh into the world he saith, *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body thou hast prepared me.* Heb. x. 5. The legal sacrifices were but temporary and shadowy, nor could the blood of *bulls and goats*, take again sin. ver. 4th. “But by the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, he hath put away sin, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Ch. ix. 26, 10, 14. When the adorable Jehovah agreeable to the everlasting purpose of his love, came into the world to save sinners, and effectually to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; he caused the *sacrifice and oblation to cease*, Dan. ix. 27. which had hitherto shadowed him forth; and presented the substance, the prepared body, an expiatory sacrifice for sins, and “to make reconciliation for iniquity.” And in this mighty work he stood alone, “and of the people there was none with me, therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me.” Is. lxiii. 3, 5. Nor was there need of an adjutor, for *HE* is the *wonderful counsellor,*
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the mighty God, the everlasting father, the prince of peace. *On the tree.* God said to the first Adam, *In the day thou eatest from that tree, thou shalt surely die.* Gen. ii. 17. And of the second Adam, *When he shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, viz. the travail of his soul and be satisfied.* II. liii. 10 11. As the curse first came on man by the tree, so Christ bore the curse, or in other words, was made a curse for us, that by the tree might come the blessing. On the tree, or on the wood, perhaps alluding to the exceeding greatness of his sufferings, in which he was like a whole burnt sacrifice offered up to God. And as, when the legal victim ready to be offer'd the wood was first laid in order, and the fire put under it, then the sacrifice was properly disposed up on the wood; so the Lord Jesus, when made a sacrifice for sin, was stretched and nailed unto the wood; his body bruised, mangled, rent and torn, while the vindictive sword pierced to his very heart, and the fire of almighty indignation wasted his spirit. Thus did Jesus, the most lovely Jesus, *bear our sins in his own body on the tree.*—The text thus opened and explained, presents this proposition to be more fully insisted upon, and enlarged.

That this sacrifice was,

First, *Perfect* corresponding with those under the law.

Second, *Propitiatory*, or placamentary.

Third, *Substitutional*, or vicarious.

Fourth, *Plenary*, or full, answering all the ends and purposes of God.

1st. *Christ our passover*, as sacrificed for us, was a sacrifice perfect in it's kind. The truth of this

this will appear by adverting to what was required in the sacrifices under the law, which were especially two things, 1st, That whatever was offered in sacrifice to God, must be spotless and unblemished. 2d, The act must be voluntary and unconstrained. The former appears from these scripture passages, Malach. i, the Lord by his prophet accuses Israel of ingratitude and impiety, in that they not only were forgetful of benefits received, but had so great a disrelish for spiritual things, that religious exercises were wearisome tasks; and the sacrifices God had commanded, were regarded as a kind of priest-craft, and pious impositions on the people. However if custom bears too hard upon them, or a national constitution obliges them to offer something; irreligious discretion directs them to offer the worst in its kind; but at last the Lord who although he suffer long, yet will not permit his ordinances to be trampled under foot, arises to vindicate his own cause, ver. 13. "Ye brought that which was
 " torn and the lame and the sick, thus ye have
 " brought an offering; but shall I accept this
 " at your hands, saith the Lord? ver. 14. cursed
 " be the deceiver," the man who would rob God, and vainly imagine he can impose on omniscience by specious appearances, that having found unblemished cattle, "that hath in his flock a male," and voweth "and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing," a blemished sacrifice, "for I am
 " a great king, saith the Lord of hosts." Thus we see how the Lord indignates the sacrifice that is not spotless, and brandishes in resentment his vindictive sword against the people he had chosen to be his own inheritance; even that sword, that

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had

had often made itself drunk with the blood of the heathen, and had rendered his name dreadful among the nations. Nor need we wonder at the reason of this resentment, since it was downright disobedience to their God, and open rebellion against their king. For the Lord had appointed by his servant Moses what kind of sacrifices the people should offer, and he would accept, Levit. xxii. 19. *The offering shall be a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats,* ver. 20. *Whatsoever hath a blemish, ye shall not offer, it shall not be acceptable for you.* ver. 21. *It shall be perfect to be accepted for you, there shall be no blemish therein.* ver. 22. *Blind, or braken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, these ye shall not offer unto the Lord.* compared with Ch. i, 3. Deut. xv. 21. 17. 1. &c. From all which it appears, that the legal sacrifices must be pure and spotless; yea some of the Jewish writers tell us, that even the heifers-hair must be intirely of the the same colour, not a hair excepted; but as this is a nicety not found in the bible, we chuse to leave it with them, and proceed to enquire, whether Jesus Christ the antitype of these sacrifices, in this particular corresponded with the type.

Here our enquiry will be twofold, first, Into the purity of his nature, respecting his birth. Second, Into the holiness of his life, untill the time he was offered on the cross. Blessed Paul speaking of mankind in general, Eph. ii. observes that the very elect themselves, of whom, Ch. i. 4, he had said, *He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, were like others children of wrath by nature,* previous to their being quickened,
ver.

ver. i. *by grace*; but our glorious Jesus by a pre-
 ter-natural conception in the womb of a virgin
 was not defiled by the common pollution, nor
 obnoxious when coming into the world to the
 penalty of sin. The old historian tells us a little
 after the fall of our first parents that *Adam begat*
a son in his own likeness. Gen. v. 3. But Je-
 hovah in the first gospel-promise calls the deliver-
 er the *seed of the woman*, and had Eve rightly
 understood the necessity of having a *high-priest*
separated from sinners, she would have had little rea-
 son to suppose or say on bearing Cain. ch. iv. 1. *I*
have gotten a man the Lord. This is that mira-
 culous conception the prophet was sent to sup-
 port the drooping spirit of the king of Judah with,
 as a certain and infallible sign that the Lord had
 not cast off his people. Is. vii. 14. "The Lord
 " himself shall give you a sign, behold a virgin
 " shall conceive and bear a son;" and Mary the
 mother of our Lord, inquisitive about the affair,
 Luke i. 34. "How shall this be seeing I know
 not a man," receives in answer, "The Holy Ghost
 " shall come upon thee, and the power of the
 " most high shall over-shadow thee, therefore al-
 " so that HOLY THING which shall be born of
 " thee, shall be called the Son of God." Some
 have thought this to be one of those unsearchable
 things mentioned Prov. xxx, 19. "There be
 " three things which are too wonderful for me,
 " yea four, which I know not; the way of an ea-
 " gle in the air," which leaves no tract percepti-
 ble to the acutest eye. "the way of a serpent up-
 " on a rock," which gliding over the solid sur-
 face, leaves no impression on the stubborn flint,
 "the way of a ship in the midst of the sea," whose

wounded waters soon are closed when pass'd the furrowing keel. "And the way of a man with "a maid," the mighty man in the maid, i. e. say they, the man Christ Jesus as conceived in the virgin Mary, is a mystery profound and altogether impenetrable. But leaving this also, which however it may be glossed and supposed to illustrate this mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, we dare not allow it any place in the foundation on which this truth is built; nor need we have recourse to far fetched conjectures, or plausible probabilities to confirm it; since it is settled and fixed in the undoubted veracity of the sacred oracles, "for such an high-priest became "us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made "higher than the heavens, Heb. vii. 26." 2d, That Jesus the Lamb of God was unspotted in his life, and undeserving the imputations of blame, and the many false accusations with which his enemies aspersed him, and essayed to blacken his character, has a sufficient testimony in the apostolic writings. St. Peter speaking of the inestimable price paid for the redemption of his people, 1 Pet. i. 18, says, "for-
 "asmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed
 "with corruptible things, as silver and gold from
 "your vain conversation, received by tradition
 "from your fathers; but with the precious blood
 "of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish,"
 having no stain, defect, or superfluity, "and
 "without spot." By the same authority, it is
 affirmed, Ch. ii. 22. "that he did no sin, nei-
 "ther was guile was found in his mouth," sup-
 ported by Is. liii. 8. 9, "he had done no vio-
 lence,

"lence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Agreeable to these is the apostle John's testimony, 1 John iii. 5. "he was manifested to take away our sin, and in him was no sin." To which also agree the words of the preacher to the gentiles, 2 Cor. v. 21. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin. From all which without attending to many other evidences yet uncalled, it appears clear as day-light, that Jesus the Saviour of the world, was spotless in nature, sinless in life, and therefore fitly answered all the types which prefigured him, and of which he was the antitype and end. The paschal Lamb must be without blemish, Exo. xii. 5. So was the Lamb of God, as above. The daily sacrifice each morning and each evening to be offered, or between the evenings, Numb. xxviii. 34, must be without spot, perfect, intire; so the holy Jesus, Heb. ix. 14, offered himself without spot to God. Thus it appears that Jesus Christ was a perfect sacrifice of immaculate purity.

Secondly, Whatever was offered in sacrifice under the law must be offered willingly; God has not need of animal blood to enrich him, for "all the beasts of the forest are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." Ps. l. 10. Nor is he delighted with the "blood of bullocks and of goats." Sacrifices tho' appointed by God were only pleasing to him, as the sacrifice had respect unto the Lamb of God, for in him only he hath declared himself well pleased. Our goodness in no wise extendeth unto the Lord, it is enough and what he asks from us; let him have the honour, and the happiness be ours. God would lead his people in every age to look to Je-

sus, and instructed them in every bleeding victim, that sin was too heinous and malign, to be pardoned without shedding of blood, without the sinner's suffering, or a surety; and as their present and eternal peace must flow from God reconciled; so the sacrifices which had respect unto this reconciliation, must be offered freely. Hence the Lord commanded his servant Moses, Levit. i. 3. "If any man of you bring an offering to the Lord, let him offer a male without blemish, he shall offer it of his own voluntary will, at the door of the tabernacle." Ch. xxii. 18. 19. "Ye shall offer it at your own will," and the withholding such offerings the Lord accounts robbery. Malach. iii. 8. "Ye have robbed me in tythes and offerings." So in like manner when the Son of God comes into the world, it is a voluntary act, "sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened," bored or digged, as, Exod. xxi. 5, 6. "If the servant shall say I love my master, &c. I will not go out free; his master shall bore his ear thro' with an aul, and he shall serve him for ever, Christ was an ear-bored servant, and his heart was wholly in the work. Ps. xl. 6. The apostle to the Heb. reads after the lxx, "a body hast thou prepared me. And lo, I come to do thy will O God." Our Lord's own words, John x. 11. are, "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep, I have power to lay it down; and I lay down my life that I might take it again." When our blessed Saviour was oppressed and sore amazed in the garden, insomuch that the human-nature staggered beneath the intollerable pressure of divine indignation,

tion, and seemed ready to start affrighted at the hideous approach of that hour of darkness, and said, "if it be possible let this cup pass from me." yet at the same time divinely upheld, and resolutely firm, he essayed not to escape from the multitude; but gently asks, "whom seek ye?" John xviii. 7. And then agreeable to the spirit and purpose that on all occasions manifested itself, and for which he came into the world, "if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." It seems altogether as needless to observe, as it would be absurd to deny, that had not our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ offered himself willingly, a fair and sufficient opportunity here offered itself, for his escape; seeing at the first interrogation, "whom seek ye," the traitor Judas and the banditti he headed being repelled by the force and majesty of his word, and their timid hearts failing, they sunk to the ground. But "for this end the adorable Redeemer came into the world," it behoved him to suffer, "to make reconciliation, and bring in an everlasting righteousness." therefore he willingly entered the field, knowing he must fall in the engagement, yet by his fall should raise up the chosen seed to the image and favour of God, and to an everlasting enjoyment of him in glory.

As Christ's sacrifice has been proved to have had in it the nature of a sacrifice, it will also appear to have been propitiatory, or placamentary; by observing, first, that the sacrifices offered by the people of Israel, agreeable to the commands of God to Moses, were ever considered in this sense. It may not be amiss to premise, that when we speak of the deity's being propitiated, or placated,

cated, that we do not conceive of him as a mutable being, that can love, hate, be angry, and appeased, like a feeble child of Man, for "he" is in one mind and who can turn him." Nor would we venture to put constructions on God's own words so very different from, and repugnant to, the plain and obvious meaning thereof; lest we should charge omniscience with obscurity and inaccuracy; and make the current coin of scripture, mere counterfeit, and the language of the Holy Ghost unmeaning jargon, and unintelligible bombast. The charge of doing which, we think lies heavy against those, who would construct the scriptures that speak of the atonement, &c. as having a reference to the conscience; and that to make an atonement for sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, &c. means no other than to placate the conscience, &c. Which manner of interpreting the scriptures, if it can be allowed as a sufficient president; there is no doctrine so foreign, and contrary to the truth of the scriptures, but at this rate may be palmed upon the world. If a man should make as free with Homer, Virgil, &c. in construing away the allowed sense of these noted authors, what would the learned world say? 'Tis pity the sacred oracles have fewer friends. We are willing to be persuaded by the current language of the word of God, that his being "angry with the wicked every day," his "wrath burning like fire," &c. bears the same aspect towards the sinner, and will at last be manifest in the same effects, as if these variable tempers were essential to the deity. And that the "Lord's turning away from his fierce" wrath, and repenting him of the evil which he
"thought

"thought to do unto his people," &c. bears an aspect of mercy, and reconciliation suitable to our ideas of a God kind and propitious. And agreeable to these sentiments we proceed to the point in hand. Not to presume on the strong probability that Adam began to offer sacrifice immediately after the promise of the woman's seed; we are certain that Adam's sons were instructed in this early act of religious worship, for they brought offerings to the Lord. Cain of the *fruit of the ground*, which as it had not respect unto the blood of Jesus, and therefore indicated the offerer void of faith in the promise, a stranger to the malignity of sin, and the manner of reconciling the sinner; his person and gift were both rejected, as an evil act proceeding from an evil mind.

But Abel brought the *firstlings of his flock, and the fat thereof*, "and the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Not because God was better pleased with a slain beast, than a sheaf of corn; but the offering was accepted for the sake of the offerer. "*The Lord had (first) respect unto Abel*, and (then) his offering; which the Apostle assures us received it's recommendatory excellence from the faith in which it was offered, Heb. xi. 4. Noah, who could not but be sensibly moved at the exhibition of that wrath, which brought an overflowing deluge on the world of the ungodly; immediately upon his coming out of the ark, erected an altar, and offered burnt offerings thereon. Gen. viii. 20. "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour, and said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake," compared with Numb. xvi. 47. "And Aaron ran into the midst of the

"con-

" congregation, and behold the plague was begun
 " among the people, (the Lord's anger and fierce
 " jealousy, like a consuming fire broke out to
 " devour) and he put on incense, and made an
 " atonement for the people; and he stood be-
 " tween the dead and the living, and the plague
 " was stayed." The burning wrath was quenched,
 and the anger of the Lord was turned away.
 It seems almost impossible to mistake the designation
 of legal sacrifices if we carefully attend to the institution
 of them in the levitical laws; nor can it be supposed
 but in consequence of the most gross inattention,
 that the Israelitish officers, ever considered their
 offerings, but as intended to avert the punishment
 due to their sins. Who for instance can read the
 fourth and fifth chapters of Leviticus, and not be
 confirmed in these truths? If the whole congregation
 sin through ignorance, the congregation shall offer
 a bullock, for the sin; *and the elders shall lay their
 hands on the head of the bullock before the Lord,*
 and the priest shall take of the blood, &c. and shall
 make an *atonement* for them, and it shall be *forgiven
 them*, chap. iv. ver. 13. 21. When a ruler hath
 sinned, the priest shall make an *atonement* for him
 concerning his *sin*, and it shall be *forgiven him*,
 ver. 22. 27. If any of the common people sin,
 the priest shall make an *atonement* for his sin
 that he hath committed, and it shall be *forgiven
 him*, ver. 27. ad ult. Now to deny these to be
 designed as (typically) propitiatory, is to shut
 our eyes against the mid-day glare and say 'tis
 dark. If it could be supposed that the whole
 congregation of Israel had mistaken the design
 of Moses, in instituting the sacrifices as propitiatory,
 which cannot be admitted without the gross-

grossest absurdity; various proofs might be produced in the practice of the after Jews, which must be allowed to be agreeable to the first design and appointment, amongst this variety I shall single out one instance, which no one with a good grace can deny to be valid. The example is, 1. Sam. vii. 8. 9. The children of Israel had by reason of their sins, been as it were forsaken of their rock; God had let loose the Philistines against them as a scourge for their disobedience, and they were left to flee before their enemies, 'till they should return to their God, *judgment* had now begun at the house of God, and the wicked sons of Eli fell by the sword, the ark of God was taken, and poor old *Eli* had his heart broken with grief, and excessive sorrow, and his neck by a fall from his seat. All this, indicated great wrath against the chosen people of God; and as such, they conceived of his dealings with them; therefore with one accord they make application to Samuel, who now appeared among them as a prophet of the Lord; and they said unto him, ver. 8. "cease not to cry unto the Lord our God, for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines." Now it was impossible so great a favourite of heaven, as was *Samuel*, should be ignorant in matters of religion; and it would in a manner be charging the Holy Ghost with foolishness to say so great a prophet was ignorant of the designation of sacrifices. Ver. 9. "And "Samuel took a sucking Lamb, and offered it for "a burnt offering wholly to the Lord; and "Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel, and the "Lord heard him." Now for what end this sacrifice was offered, if not to propitiate, is not easy

easy to determine ; unless it should be said, that it was only propitiatory as it respected and shadowed forth the Lamb of God, in whom alone the father has declared himself well pleased, which is the very thing we contend for. That sacrifices were sometimes eucharistical, is not denied ; but that they were always such cannot be allowed without the greatest violation of truth.

The heathen nations who it is probable either retained the custom of sacrifices and the notion of their being propitiatory, as handed down from the first ages of the world, and the common parents of mankind ; or had in imitation of the people of Israel offered slain beasts in sacrifice, in hopes to propitiate their false Gods and insure their help and succour ; considered their sacrifices which they frequently offered to be propitiatory. This appears from the well known passage in the heathen poets, when the pestilence raged in the grecian camp, the cause was sought whether sacrifices to Jupiter might not propitiate him, and procure exemption from the reigning death ; which shews their notion of a sacrifice to have been what we contend for. This is further confirmed by the practice of those nations that lived nearest to the people of Israel, and at a time when sacrifices were most in use. 1 Sam. chap. vi. 3. When the Lord plagued the Philistines because they had taken the ark of God, they called, ver. 2. for the priests and diviners, saying, " what shall we do " to the ark of the Lord ? Tell us wherewith " we shall send it to its place." And they said, " if ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, " send it not empty ; but in any wise return him " a trespass-offering ; then shall ye be healed."

Thus

Thus it appears that sacrifices were first intended as propitiatory, and have been always considered as such, both by the heathen nations, and the people of God themselves, for whom they were primarily instituted. But the thing to be proved was, that the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ was of this kind; which proof will appear by the following reasoning. If these sacrifices which in themselves were but types, and shadows, were propitiatory as they had respect unto the antitype, and substance; much more shall that antitype and substance itself, be such. But that antitype and substance is Jesus Christ; for it has been already proved that he was a perfect sacrifice. Therefore the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ was propitiatory. All this is further confirmed by the phraseology of the new testament, when the great messenger of the covenant was to be manifested to the world, and all the prophecies concerning him were now to be accomplished; his harbinger was sent to prepare his way before him, and bear testimony of him to the people. When Noah had built an altar and offered burnt offerings after the flood, it is said, *the Lord smelled a sweet savour*, God beheld in the sacrifice then offered, that lively image of his son, in which his soul is satisfied; but this in respect to the real fact was yet afar off. But now, Immanuel, God with us, appears in the flesh; he is declared by an audible voice to be the *son of God, in whom I am well pleased*. I acquiesce, I rest satisfied—The blood of slain beasts could not delight the soul of God; but the sacrifice of his son, as it made a full atonement for sin, was satisfactory. The apostle Paul calls Christ, the propitiation, Rom.

iii.

iii. 25. the mercy-seat, Heb. ix. 5. seeing it is by faith in his blood, that we obtain mercy, and God is reconciled to us. "If any man sin," 1. John ii. 1, 2. "we have an advocate, who is the propitiation for our sins." And notwithstanding sin had wrought in our hearts an enmity against God, yet, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son," Rom. v. 10. And God hath put into the hands of his ministers the word of reconciliation, to wit, that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," 2 Cor. v. 18. "For God so loved the world, that he sent his son the propitiation for our sins." 1 John iv. 10. As the scriptures of the old and new testament from beginning to end have a special reference to this, we only need advert unto them, to receive all the proof, minds open to conviction can desire. We come 3dly to shew, that Christ's sufferings, were *vicarious*, and that as a surety he stood engaged to discharge the debt, of sin his people stood chargeable with; and that what he suffered, was in the room, or stead of others. That he was a substitute, and suffered instead of sinners, will lose the aspect of injustice with which some are bold enough to charge the divine procedure; when the scriptural account of things is attended to; which every where sets forth Jesus Christ as taking his people's sin upon himself, and therefore in his own body bearing the punishment due to sin. Sometimes Christ is represented as bearing sins in types, and shadows, in the ceremonial law; and indeed most of the sacrifices offered respected him in this view. The sinner behaved when casting his corn into the fire, which otherwise God had given

given him for food, to confess that his desert by reason of sin, was thus to be cast into the everlasting flame of God almighty's wrath; and humbly to acknowledge when the sacrificing knife pierced the bleeding victim's heart, this, this, and much more, his sins had laid him obnoxious to; and that in hope of a more perfect sacrifice to be offered, he looked thro' the shadow to the substance. The special instance of the scape-goat, Levit. xvi. may serve as an illustration of this truth. Aaron the priest must take two goats, and present them before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; and cast lots upon them there, one lot for the Lord, and another lot for the scape-goat; and the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, must be offered for a sin offering. This signified to the people, that God was a holy sin-hating, and sin-punishing God; and that would by no means clear the guilty; and herein bore towards the offender, a most formidable aspect of the most spotless purity, and inflexible justice. Afterwards the live-goat must be presented before the Lord, and Aaron the high-priest, (the figure of the great high-priest of our profession,) must lay both his hands upon the head of the live-goat; (both hands) by way of acknowledgment, "Lord we thy people and the sheep of thine hand, have done what we ought not, and left undone what we ought to have done," "and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat." Here is a transfer of sin, or guilt by divine appointment; now to ask, how can these things be? Only betrays a vicious curiosity

curiosity in converting to matter of speculation what should be matter of faith and adoration. Which of all the wounded Israelites when stung by the fiery serpents, was able to assign any other cause of the miraculous cure, but a divine appointment; and why was this amazing means of cure prescribed, but to lead them by faith to look to Jesus. Moreover, the goat was to be sent away by the hand of a fit man, into the *wilderness*; and what was all this, but that the people while they beheld it, might be led to conceive that thus their sins they had now confessed should be buried in oblivion, “and if sought for should no where be found.” Therefore it is added, “and the goat shall bear upon him, all their iniquities;” figuring out hereby, how the Lord Jesus should bear the sins of his people, by a transfer, or imputation thereof to himself. This scape-goat therefore, signified to the people, that the Lord in much mercy, would lay help on one mighty, and agreeable to his unparalleled love, and unerring wisdom, would contrive a way to punish sin, yet save the sinner, “to be just, and yet justify the ungodly.” At other times we may view the same important truth, exhibited in the expressive language of the prophets and apostles. Is. liii. 4. “Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows; ver. 5. he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him. ver. 6. All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” Agreeable to which, is 2 Cor. v. 21, “He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin. Christ hath redeemed us
“ from

“ from the curse of the law, being made a curse
 “ for us.” Gal. iii. 13. And my text saith, “ He
 “ bare our sins in his own body on the tree.”

Now in exact correspondence with these, the sentiments of the inspired writers, we frequently hear them speak of Christ’s suffering in our stead ; because our sins were put to his account, and he suffered as tho’ he had been a sinner, justly chargeable with such a multitude of personal transgressions.

Hence that evangelical prophet has it, “ The
 “ chastisement of our peace was upon him. He
 “ was cut off out of the land of the living, for the
 “ transgression of my people was he stricken.”

And, “ by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.” Blessed Paul, calls him our passover, “ Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. 1 Cor. v. 7. “ And once in the end of the world, he hath appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself ; and was offered to bear the sins of many.” Heb. ix. 26, 27. The sufferings of Christ as narrated by the evangelists must be conceived to be the most exquisite and severe ; and it might well be said in respect thereof, “ come and see if there ever was any sorrow, like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me ; wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.” Lam. i. 12. And if sin be the only source of sorrow, and cause of suffering ; how is it possible that Jesus a person most holy, in whom there was no sin, neither guile found in his mouth, should yet suffer in the highest degree, and that not only in his body by the hands of barbarous and bloody-minded men ; but also in his
 F soul,

soul, by the just and equitable sentence, and procedure of a righteous and most gracious God? For “ he was stricken and smitten of God, and “ afflicted,” Is. liii. 4. And in the garden, when alone, “ being in an agony, his sweat was “ like great drops of blood falling to the ground.” How impossible it is to account for these things if we refuse to receive instruction from the spirit of truth, as speaking in his blessed book; but when this is religiously adverted to, how consistent and comfortable do all these sacred truths appear. Then we see “ mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kindly kissing “ one another.” Then *a way, a new and living way* is opened whereby the guilty, but now ransomed sinner may escape; and hereby the law, the pure and perfect law of God is *magnified and made honourable*. It appears, therefore, from the most unquestionable testimony, that Christ bare the sins, and suffered in the room or stead of others, “ He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;” which leads us in the last place to prove, that what he suffered was *full* and satisfactory to the procuring all the blessedness to sinners the wisdom and goodness of God had determined. This we shall endeavour to elucidate and settle by noting 1st, The dignity of the sufferer. 2d, The greatness of his sufferings, and 3dly, by considering his resurrection, as an indubitable proof of the sufficiency of his sufferings. As the scriptures sometimes respect our Saviour as man, or assuming the human nature, and in which sense, *my father is greater than I*, and sometimes in respect to the divine, and then it is said, *I and my father are one*. It

is with an eye to the latter we would be supposed to speak, when treating of the dignity of the Redeemer's person. But what finite mind can grasp, comprehend or conceive the greatness, power, and majesty of Jehovah! What can parallel those striking interrogations in the book of Job, ch. 38, &c? What can compare with the lofty descriptions of the glory and mightiness of God to be met with in the book of Psalms! How is the mind of man bewildered, and led into a labyrinth of inextricable perplexity, when drawn out in contemplation of that almighty fiat, and its marvellous effects. *HE spake, and it was done, HE commanded and it stood fast.* Speak we of existence, his name JEHOVAH, alludes to his everlastingness, for, *before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.* Of wisdom,—this is great and knows no bound, a depth where all our thoughts are drown'd. Who knows but he whereupon the foundations of the earth are laid? Or how by his power *he shut up the sea as with doors, when it first issued as out of the womb?* Who can conceive his glory and majesty, when riding upon the heaven of heavens, or attended with myriads of angels he majestically walks on the wings of the wind. *At his rebuke the deep foundations of the world are discovered, even at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.* And when he bows the heavens and comes down in answer to the prayer of sinful dust and ashes, *the earth shakes and trembles, the solid foundations of the hills are moved; a terrible smoke proceedeth from his nostrils, and devouring fire out of his mouth.* At his excessive glory, dark-

ness flees and falls beneath *Him*, on the expanded wings of *cherubim* *he flies*, and hastes to the salvation of his servant on the *wings* of the *wind*. Ps. 18. And yet, hear it O heavens, and be astonished O earth! This God is become our God and Saviour, by an act of undeserved mercy, more stupendiously marvellous, than all that supreme and sovereign majesty. This God, assumed the human nature, and appeared in man! This is that *mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the flesh*, which is the very *foundation of the truth*. The child to be born of the virgin must be called *Immanuel*, God with us, and the word that was *made flesh*, is that which in the beginning was *with God, and was God; and by whom all things were made*. John i. 1, 2. *Yea all things were made by him, and for him*, even *angels, principalities, and powers, &c.* which created beings, as himself was creator, he must be essentially different from, and superior to. Colos. i. 16. Paul who had been taught by him, and of him, in the third heaven, the habitation of his holiness; tells the Phillippians, ch. ii. 6. That Christ *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, no infringement on another's right, being himself *Jehovah*; notwithstanding he emptied himself of that dazzling glory which mortal eye cannot behold, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man: and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient even to the death of the cross.—When thus we view the co-equal Son of God, by marvellous and mystic union taking hold of the seed of Abraham; that God and man, he might have the right of redemption, and power to

to redeem ; what sins of finite man can be conceived, beyond the reach of such infinite satisfaction, as he is capable to make ? Allowing that the sins of man as committed against a God of infinite perfections, deserve infinite punishment as condign ; lo ! here is infinity itself engaged, and engaged to pay a price in *full* for precious souls. And this may lead us, 2dly, to notice the greatness of his sufferings incarnate. But who can think of these without a sigh, or speak or write of them without a tear ? The prophet saw him at a distance, and declared the depth of woe, that man of sorrows must wade thro' to bring salvation to his people. " I am despised of men, and
 " a reproach of the people ; all they that see me
 " laugh me to scorn ; they shoot out the lip and
 " shake the head, they gaped upon me with their
 " mouths, as a ravening, and a roaring lion. &c."
 " Dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the
 " wicked have enclosed me ; they pierced my
 " hands and my feet, I may tell all my bones." Pf. 22. All this and much more was fulfilled in our blessed Lord. When he first appear'd in our world, he came as a stranger into a strange country ; no regal pomp to aggrandize his person, or courtly splendour to celebrate his natal day ; but the meek and humble Jesus is born of an * obscure *virgin*, in a mean and stinking stable, and wrapped in swathes laid in a manger. Nor was his following life different to this beginning ; " he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with
 F 3 " grief."

* Obscure respecting the etymology of the heb. (*hamlah*) hid under the care of parents, &c.

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“grief.” While employed, and exercised in all the kind beneficent works which proceeded from a heart most full of benevolence and heavenly affection; yet was his character blackened with all the malevolent aspersions, that Satan and his instruments could load him with; and his works which could not be effected but by the power of God, are wickedly misinterpreted, and ascribed to the power of the devil. They who seemed to judge most charitably concerning him are moved with pity towards him, and supposing him to be mad, came forth to *lay hold on him*. How afflicting was the behaviour and conduct of Judas towards his blessed master when that prediction was fulfilled in him, “he that did eat bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me.” What Judas sell thy master for money! Betray thy friend into the hands of those that sought to slay him! May we, admonished by thy example, flee from covetousness, as we would wish to escape the dreadful consequences of so unchristian a temper. The man of sorrow see, forsook by all, betrayed, accused, condemned, derided, mocked, and spit upon in Herod’s judgment-hall; compelled to bear his cross, crowned with thorns, and nailed to the tree; and there how great that hour of darkness! Deprived of comfort from the source of bliss.—Who can conceive what Jesus felt when crying out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? A soldier with a spear pierced his heart, and forthwith came out blood and water.* Thus exhausting all his veins, bleeding at every sacred pore, he paid the price; not corruptible gold, but blood divine, *the blood of God.* Acts xx. 28. What could not such sufferings buy? What guilty rebel
not

not redeem? Worlds purchased with a single drop of this his sacred blood, were bought too dear. Thus hung the suffering friend of sinners on the tree, nor could the cruelty of the bloody soldiers turn his heart to rage, or the most provoking insults of his greatest adversaries draw resentment from his peaceful, sympathizing soul; but in the deepest agonies of mind, and under the sharpest sense of the most pungent pain, his prayer is preferred, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Nor did the captain of our salvation fall, till lucifer like lightening fell from heaven; the work, the mighty, great, and glorious work, he finished e'er he died; witness that cry, that heart-reviving cry, *'tis finished*, the great salvation is secured, the price now paid, everlasting life is sure to all the seed. 3dly. The certainty of our Saviour's resurrection may be considered as an additional proof of the sufficiency of his satisfaction. In proof of his resurrection, we here offer nothing, supposing the truth of this to be so confirmed and fixt, as not to admit a doubt. And it is by the exertion of this special act of omnipotence, that *Jesus is declared to be the son of God with power*, and through which God hath given proof of his good pleasure in him. The apostles of our Lord, after all they had seen and heard in his life, found their most sanguine hopes and expectations concerning him blasted by his death; "we trusted, (say they) "that it was he, that should have re-
"deemed Israel." And nothing short of a satisfactory proof in his being raised, could revive their languid spirits, and invigorate their blasted hopes. Our blessed Lord therefore gives them all the demonstration they could desire or wish
that

that in his being raised from the dead, a proof was given of the completion of his undertaking, "All power, (saith he) is given unto me in heaven, and in earth," "Go, and disciple the nations," through the faith of this, tell poor broken-hearted sinners, "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus Christ, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" Rom. x. 9. God in this very act, bearing testimony to the sufficiency of his satisfaction. In another part of this large letter to the Rom. the sacred penman largely treating of the sinner's justification, and acceptance with God, says,— *who (Christ) died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.* Rose again to make manifest the sufficiency of his merits for the salvation of his people; and the acceptance of the sacrifice as an atonement for sin. It is said the Jews had a custom of tying a shred of scarlet-cloth to the horns of the scape-goat, and another answering to that to the gate of the temple, or the top of the rock where the goat was turned loose; and if that turned white, (as they say it usually did) they concluded the slain goat was accepted in sacrifice, and their sins were expiated, otherwise not; so Jesus our Lord in that he rose from the dead, has left no room to doubt of his being accepted for us, since also the trophies of victory over the powers of darkness, and an everlasting righteousness brought in are so eminently displayed in his ascension to glory. *For when he ascended up on high, he led, (or gave proof that he led) captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* Ps. lxviii. 18. The sacrificing Israelites never doubted that their offerings

ferings were accepted when the Lord answered by
 fire, and what stronger proof can be given of the
 plenary satisfaction of Jesus than that of being
 raised from the dead. The prophets of Baal from
 morning to evening cried in vain, *O Baal bear us*,
 but the God that answered by fire hereby manifested
 himself to be the only prayer-hearing, and prayer-
 answering God. When a debtor has received
 from the hands of his creditor a receipt in full,
 this serves as the strongest proof that he has no
 further demands upon him relative thereto; our
 blessed Lord's resurrection is a receipt brought
 back from the great creditor God; in which is
 written at large and legible to faith, "Thee I
 " have accepted as surety for thy people, their
 " sins and multiplied transgressions I impute to
 " thee; and as thou bearest their sins and like-
 " wise the shame and pain thereof shall fall on
 " thee; they are obnoxious to the curse, be thou
 " for them a curse and they shall be redeemed;
 " thy obedience perfect and intire, I accept as
 " theirs; and thus absolved from guilt by thy
 " atoning death, accepted into favour by thy
 " righteous life, the holy seed shall live a life of
 " faith, possessing grace below, 'till raised with
 " thee their head, and for thy sake, admitted in-
 " to heaven, they shall reign with thee for ever."
 Here then is the ground of our hope, because he
 died, we shall not die, because *he lives*, we shall
live also; and hereby know we that he is able to
 save to the uttermost, *seeing he ever liveth, to*
make intercession for us.

From the proposition thus insisted on at large
 and demonstrated, arises this corollary. They for
 whom our blessed Saviour died, cannot possibly fail
 of

of obtaining that salvation intended to be purchased, and procured by his death.

But what may be said relative to this, shall be the subject of another discourse ; and may what has now been said of the sufficiency of our Saviour's atonement sink deep into all our hearts, and may we feel the salutary effects thereof in our lives ; may we be made abundant partakers of that *grace* in this world, which shall so *reign* in our hearts *thro' righteousness*, that it may terminate in glory in the world to come. *Amen and Amen.*

S E R-





S E R M O N IV.



1 P E T E R, ii. 24.

*Who his own self bare our Sins, in his
own Body on the Tree.*

WH O can reflect on that most astonishing act of divine philanthropy as it is made manifest in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and intercession of the son of God, and not be ravished with wonder, and lost in surprise and admiration ! Seeing that in every one of these, a subject for our contemplation is opened, not unworthy of the most exalted seraph to attend ; and in each a fountain overflowing with mercy, grace, and heavenly benedictions ; whose consolating streams shall satiate the just, through the vast and trackless depths of eternity.

That the co-equal Son of the everlasting Father should cloath himself with clay, and wrapped in the vile rags of mortality should sojourn on earth ! It is well my soul, it is well my friends and brethren, the God of truth has declared it, or no flesh living could have believed it. That he should subject himself to the injunctions of his own most righteous law, fulfill it's precepts, and
amply

amply satisfy the largest demands of injured justice; is an instance of such love, as angels themselves having never known before, are moved with pious curiosity *to look into*. The cause or the effect, who can admire most. The former being resolvable only into the love, the everlasting love of God, the latter terminating in the bliss, the inconceivable everlasting bliss of sinful man. When death itself stoops down to the lowest depths of ignominy and disgrace; when the incarnate Jesus suffers, bleeds, and dies; what heart but feels the piercing arrows of almighty vengeance, barbed with sin, and threatening death, strike through his very soul! And afterwards to see him rise, rise as a conquerer leading death and hell in captive chains, bearing an indubitable testimony that God was reconciled in him to all that should believe! What bosom doth not bound with bursting joy, to see the suffering Saviour rise, breaking the bonds of death, and sanctifying for his people a pleasing passage thro' the gloomy grave! How inestimable are the blessings his kind hands bestow, now that he is entered into the holy of holies, and pleads our cause in heaven; *he lives, he greatly lives, he lives for evermore and has the keys of death and hell; he shuts and no man opens, and when opening none can shut against him.*

Power is all to Jesus giv'n,

Power o'er hell, o'er earth, and heav'n.

Having proved that our blessed Saviour by the one offering made of his own body on the tree hath expiated sin, and brought in *an everlasting righteousness*, seeing that the sacrifice made of himself was *perfect, propitiatory, vicarious, and plenary*; I now proceed to enquire for our special

con-

consolation, wherein that salvation procured for his people by the shedding of his blood, authenticated to them by the sufficiency of his merits, doth consist. 1st, Our blessed Lord in dying for his people, did not intend so immediately to destroy death as that it should exercise no more power in the world, or that the purchase of his blood should never die; this truth is self-evident, yet did he fulfill all that the prophet had foretold in this respect concerning him: "I will ransom thee from the power of the grave; I will redeem thee from death: O death I will be thy plagues, O grave I will be thy destruction." Hof. xiii. 14. Which prophecy compared with the fulfillment of it in his resurrection, presents to us a proof that death and the grave could not detain him. It is said, Heb. ii. 14, "That because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise also himself took part of the same; that through death, i. e. his own dying on the cross, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil;" which destruction is to be understood, first, Of his having subdued him, bruised his head and made him captive. Second, Of the death's wound he then gave him in delivering his people from under his power; and a dreadful earnest of the almighty's displeasure against sin, which should terminate in the everlasting destruction of him and his fallen legions. In like manner, Jesus by his dying hath disarmed death, *The sting of death is sin, but thanks be to God, a victory is given to the believer, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. xv. 56. And hence death is to these not the dread king of terror; but a messenger of peace; he comes commissioned by
our

our Lord, to call his servants home; not to alarm the waiting soul with hostile threatenings, but with a peaceful voice to signify to them the will of their all-conquering Lord, and sign their passport through the gloomy vale. Since Jesus died upon the cross, death only reigns by toleration; reigns for a season, so deputed by our sovereign prince, who will not fail at length for ever to abolish him, and deprive him of the power he now holds by permission over the sons of disobedience; for *death* itself shall one day die, and be "cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." Rev. xx. 14. Till this, the mediatorial kingdom shall not cease, nor Jesus the great mediator leave off to intercede; "for he must reign 'till he hath put all enemies under his feet, the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; and then shall he deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, and God shall be all in all." 1 Cor. 15. Nor is there any good reason to object, that because his people, die, his redemption was incomplete: for 'tis evident an exemption from corporal death was never intended by him, and therefore not to be considered as included in the covenant of grace; yet has Christ by dying drawn the sting of death, so that now he may alarm, but not confound; since it is certain the believer does but sleep in certain hope to rise and reign with God; and the loathsome grave itself since Jesus died and rose, is become a passage of purification to the just. Nor, 2dly, did our blessed Lord so intend to save his people, as that they might not continually need him as an *high-priest* to take away the *iniquity of their holy things*, and while living in the body by
reason

reason of imperfection, be left under a daily and hourly necessity of washing in the sin-cleansing fountain of his precious blood, the *fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness*. Zech. xiii, 1. The question commonly asked relative to this, by such as are strenuous for sinless perfection, is weak and inconsiderate, (viz) “whether our Lord Jesus “be not able to save from all sin? If sin be more “mighty than God, &c.” Which question, may be answered by asking another, “Could not the “Almighty have prevented the first entrance of sin “into the world? Or has not Jesus power ab- “lutely to save all men?” In this enquiry we ought to attend not to what God can do, but to what he will do of his own sovereign good pleasure; for all salvation is by grace; and it is presumed the manifestations of his pleasure agreeable to his own purpose, will best be discovered in the experience of the most eminent of his saints while here on earth, whose trials, weaknesses, doubts and deliverances are faithfully recorded, for our encouragement and consolation who are called by grace to tread in their footsteps, and follow them in the faith and patience of the saints.

Noah stands distinguished from and superior in piety to those of the age in which he lived; he was a partaker of that grace that bringeth salvation, for, “he found grace in the eyes of the Lord,” and walked in good works, and obtained a character not inferior to any of the most eminent champions for God; for “Noah was a just man, “and perfect in his generations, and Noah walk- “ed with God.” When the Lord overthrew the world of the ungodly, he remembered *Noah* and appointed an ark for his protection; this was
a com-

a comfortable indication of his favour, and an earnest of that final salvation he should be made a happy partaker of. Yet after all this *Noah* through the imperfection remaining in him having planted a vineyard the poor old man too far indulged a craving appetite, and drank over largely of the blood of the grape, and lay uncovered in his tent. Awful admonition this to us, never to think ourselves secure from the surprizes of sin, or to remit for one moment that watchfulness over our own hearts, which will always be found necessary, as a mean enjoined by God, to preserve from the evil thereof.

It would be needless to insist on the miscarriages of Lot, Abraham, Moses, David, &c. arising from the remains of the corrupt nature; when at the same time they partook largely of the saving grace of God, and were high in the favour of heaven. And although their sins might darken their evidence, and expose them to the divine chastisements; yet it does by no means appear that they were disinherited, and being children of God, before were, 'till raised by repentance now the children of the devil; since "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he deliv-
 " lighteth in his way," from which if he err through unwatchfulness, or *fall* by temptation, "he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord
 " upholdeth him with his hand." The heavenly-instructed Paul when having walked with God and his Son Jesus Christ in the power and spirit of his blessed gospel, almost thirty years, gives this account of himself. Rom. 7. "I find a law
 " that when I would do good evil is present with
 " me, for I delight in the law of God, after the
 " in-

"inward man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, &c."

And yet at the same time assuring us that such was his faith in God, and the gift of grace thereby, that "I am persuaded (saith he) that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Furthermore, not to advert to the almost numberless absurdities with which the doctrine of sinless perfection is attended, let this on consideration be adduced. Either this salvation (perfect holiness) is common to all saints, or peculiar to some; if the former, the claim to christianity belongs to very few indeed; if the latter, then it must arise either from a superior measure of grace, given to some, or a superior improvement of that common measure of grace given to all in others; but such superior measure of grace is taken no notice of in the word of God, nor do any of the most eminent saints in the old or new testament appear to have been partakers of it; and if it arise from a superior improvement of the common measure of grace bestowed on every believer, who in this respect dare vie with the blessed apostles and witnesses of Jesu's death and resurrection? As these who had the first fruits of the spirit were strangers to any such salvation, we may safely conclude it was never intended by our suffering Saviour.

Secondly, We come now more directly to enquire what salvation was intended as the purchase of our dear Redeemer's blood. Our Saviour's intention as made known to us by his apostle John,

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1 Ep. iv. 5, 8. was "to take away our sins, "to destroy the works of the devil." And the angel sent to admonish of his birth, says, "he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. i. 21. Jesus is that *messenger*, that *interpreter*, that one of a thousand that shews unto man his *uprightness*, and faith, "deliver him from going "down to the pit, I have found an atonement."

Job. xxxiii. 24. *Cberubim and a flaming sword* not only guard and *keep the way of the tree of life*, that the sinner is prohibited all access thereto, but the vindictive sword of stern justice hangs naked over the criminals guilty head continually; and seems athirst for the blood of such rebels as dared by disobedience to rise in arms against their God. To deliver from this deserved doom, our gracious Saviour came into the world; and in the kind unalterable counsel of our God was a Lamb slain from the foundation thereof. He drank the bitter cup, the cup of vengeance full of the Almighty's indignation against sin; the dreadful, deadly dart hurled from the hand of omnipotence pierced his tender soul; he died to draw the sting of death, and deliver his people from death, and dread of death, and condemnation. Hence "there "is now no condemnation to them that are in him."

Rom. viii. 1. "They have redemption through "his blood." Coloss. i. 14. And by his incarnation, life, and death, he hath delivered those who "the fear of death were all their life-time subject "to bondage. Heb. ii. 15, and these believing in him are freed from guilt and condemnation.

John iii. 36. Thus did Jesus intend to save his people from the guilt of sin. 2dly, And as Jesus saves from guilt by becoming surety for the
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the sinner, and from death by dying for him ; it necessarily follows that he intended to save his people from the penalty of sin : for where guilt is not (at least) imputed, the obligation to punishment arising therefrom ceases. Hence it is, that believers are said to have *passed from death unto life*, and, *he that believes though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that lives, and believes in me, (saith Christ) shall never die.* When the wicked are represented as goats at the left hand of the righteous judge, and from thence are driven sentenced to destruction and everlasting flames ; the righteous, the dear purchase of his blood are spared in that day of making up his jewels, and accepted with the gladdening approbation of heaven's Almighty King, *Come ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you.* The unbelievers, the abominable, and all liars must have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, but the great shepherd *knows his sheep*, and their names are written *in the slain Lamb's book of life.* Rev. xiii. 8. 3dly, Believers in Christ Jesus are made a free people, they are citizens of the new, the heavenly Jerusalem, and are all free-born ; their language is, *O Lord we are thy servants, thou hast loosed our bonds, we will walk before thee in upright paths.* Sin does not now reign in *their mortal bodies that they should obey it in the lusts thereof*, for " Jesus has made them free, therefore they are free indeed." Sin in the believer is subdued by sovereign and superior grace ; that as " sin once reigned unto death, now grace reigns through righteousness unto everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord, Rom. 5. ult. And " those members that were

“formerly the instruments of unrighteousness,
 “unto sin, are now instruments of righteousness
 “unto God, as being made alive from the dead.”
 Thus the Lord Jesus saves his people from the
 power of sin, agreeable to his gracious intention,
 and receives from all that believe the free-will
 offering of a ready mind; “for he makes them
 “a willing people in the day of his power.” Ps.
 cx. 3. Sin may now oppose and yield reluctant,
 wind and turn with many a snaky wile in the old
 man of nature, but it must submit; *the elder shall
 serve the younger*, saith the Lord. Nature how-
 ever stubborn, must yield to sovereign grace.
The strength of sin is the law. But happy the be-
 liever he is not now *under the law, but under grace.*
 Rom. vi. 14.

Thus from the guilt, the power, the pain, Jesus
 redeems the soul;
 This we expect and not in vain, His blood shall
 make us whole—

But all this is but a small measure, the negative
 part of that salvation he intended. Sin had made
 his people wretched, therefore he would restore
 peace and happiness to them, and that by proclaim-
 ing to the world by the ministry of the gospel, his
 purpose to save all poor sinners believing in him.
 “Go ye, (said he) into all the world, and preach
 “the gospel to every creature.” The gospel,
 the good tidings from heaven, “that God was
 “in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.”
 2 Cor. v. 19. “That God hath given to us e-
 “ternal life, and this life is in his Son.” 1 John
 v. 11. This is God’s *record* concerning his son,
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this he testifies and declares to the world (allow me the expression) on the word of a God; therefore he who disbelieves it, *makes God a liar*, and esteems him to be *altogether such a one as himself*, in short, makes the God of truth, the father of falsehood. For the language of an unbeliever runs thus, 'God indeed has declared to the world that he is well *pleased in his Son*, and will cast out none that seek salvation by him, but will pardon their sins and save them to the *uttermost*; he has said that with him there is mercy and plentiful redemption, and that he will multiply his mercies more than the multiplied transgressions of the sinner that turns unto him.' II. iv. 7. 'But I do not, cannot believe a word of all this; He may indeed shew mercy to some who are more deserving of it, but I have no reason to expect it; I must become more holy e'er I can be happy.' &c. Thus reasoning but not aright, the unbeliever rejects the counsel of God, and judges himself, "unworthy of everlasting life." Acts xiii. 46. But where the heavenly wind descends and blows upon the heart, it dispels from thence the clouds of ignorance, renews the face of the sinful soul, and irradiating all it's powers, prepares it to receive by faith in an *honest and good heart*, the truth of the gospel in the love of the truth. The happy result of this reception is thus described in the blessed word; "He that believeth hath everlasting life. John iii. 36. "He that liveth, (quickened by the spirit, for no dead soul believes) "and believeth, shall never die." John xi. 26. These are the sheep of Jesu's fold, which shall "never perish, neither, (saith our Lord,) "shall any pluck them out of my hand. John

x. 28. These are the *justified by faith* spoken of Rom. v. 1, &c. who now have *peace with God*; a firm, a sure, a stable peace; not arising from the flights of fancy, and enkindled by a warm imagination; but built on the immoveable basis of veracity itself; built on the infallible word of that God whose faithfulness and "truth reacheth unto the clouds." Ps. xxxvi. 5. A faith thus founded on the word of God, not on the fallacious and deceptive joys of sense, produces a peace exempt from the numberless interruptions which those joys are subject to; the nipping blasts of bleakish winds, may cause the flower to wither, droop and die, but yet the root remains secure; hence saith the soul-supporting prophet in the Holy Ghost. II. 1. 10, "Who
 " is among you that feareth the Lord, that obey-
 " eth the voice of his servant, that walketh in
 " darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in
 " the name of the Lord, and stay himself upon
 " his God. Faith is what the word of God ever
 requires in order to salvation; Jesus therefore
 when he purchased salvation for his people, pur-
 chased also whatever was necessary in order to that
 salvation. Just as a prudent man who would pur-
 chase a house in the midst of a large field, would
 be careful at the same time to buy a passage to
 his house. Hence Jesus is said to be "exalted a
 " prince and a Saviour to give repentance and re-
 " mission of sins. Acts v. 31. And Eph. ii. 8.
 Faith is declared to be the *gift of God*; Peter's
 faith is said to be of God, "Blessed art thou
 " Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath
 " not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which
 " is in heaven. Math. xvi. 17. Hence also it
 appears that Jesus did not only intend to make
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salvation possible, by relaxing the law, and dying to purchase acceptance through imperfect obedience; but to make salvation certain (without which it could not with propriety be called salvation) procuring at the expence of his blood, all that pertained thereto, and securing it to believers by his infallible word and promise. 2dly, Sin had defaced the image of God on the soul, that most essential image of himself, *holiness*; and hereby rendered the sinner quite incapable of the enjoyment of God the chiefest good. Jesus therefore to remove this evil, restore God's image, and capacitate the sinner to enjoy him, came into the world, lived, died, rose, and reigns above. Agreeable to this his gracious purpose, the Redeemer prays, John xvii. 17, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." Thy word, the testimony given concerning Jesus, the sum of the gospel; this truth is of a holy cleansing nature, "he that hath that hope, (twin sister of this faith) purifies himself even as he is pure. 1 John iii. 3. He that believes "obtains a lot and portion among them that are sanctified through faith in Jesus Christ. Acts xxiv. 18. The seed sown in the believer is "incorruptible seed." 1 Pet. i. 23. and the blessed spirit that regenerates them is a *holy spirit*. John iii. 3. Believers are "created anew in Christ Jesus, and old things are passed away. Jesus Christ once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. 1 Pet. iii. 18. 1st, In a way of reconciliation by pardoning our sins, and removing the mountains of guilt that intervened, and cut off the communications of divine and spiritual joys, and 2dly, In a way of enjoyment of that

that peace, that bliss, and heavenly delight, which sin by reason of it's defilement and contrariety to the divine purity, had rendered us utterly incapable of partaking in; by restoring his image to the soul, by the renovating power of his gracious spirit, and by transforming the whole man by the efficacy of his grace, into that glorious form and likeness of himself, which he cannot behold but with complacency and delight. Sanctification in the scripture sense and language is first, either legal as Heb. ix. 13. and herein is an emblem of the inward washing of the Holy-Ghost, or 2dly, evangelical, and herein respects that perfection and certainty of the spirit's work in believers as the infallible effect of the merits of Christ. Again, sanctification is either imputative, as 1 Cor. i. 30. "Christ is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; or inherant called the *sanctification of the spirit*." 2 Theff. ii. 13. Believers being born of the spirit (in order of time) previous to their being such, partake of the pure and holy nature of that spirit which begot them, so that faith itself concerning which such excellent things are said in the word of God, is an holy act, a divine and spiritual acquiescence in God's method of salvation, an unfeigned and cordial reception of his declared purpose of the salvation of his people through the merits of his well-beloved son. Hence the apostle Paul reminding the Corinthians of their former sins and lusts, adds, "but now ye are sanctified, now ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." 1 Cor. vi. 11. Hence also the same apostle, Rom. viii. 30, speaking in respect of the certainty of
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salvation to the called, saith, "whom he justified, " them he also glorified." We may easily from hence pass on to a third thing included in that salvation, our Saviour intended for his people, which is their glorification together with himself in heaven for ever and ever. But the exceeding fullness of that salvation being like the fountain from whence it first took it's rise, namely, the LOVE OF GOD, is altogether immeasurable in the length and breadth, and height and depth thereof; therefore a few things at present concerning it must suffice. It would be impossible for us to form any conceptions of that state of blifs and glory that awaits the righteous, if God had not revealed it in his word; therefore such blifs and glory cannot be hoped for, but through faith; otherwise we must suppose a man to hope for what he does not believe to exist, which is absurd, and contrary to the nature of hope. Now in respect to the happiness reserved for the just, it may be considered, 1st. as it consists in an exemption from all sorrow, suffering, pain, grief, and death itself; this world is a state of almost uninterrupted trial and difficulty, all our sweets are imbittered with the most distasteful ingredients; and our most sanguine expectations of sublunary good, are blasted e'er we come to the enjoyment of them, or disappoint us in the pleasure we had promised to ourselves therein. There is no tasting the honey of earthly pleasure, without a sensation of the pain arising from the piercings of the thorn from which it is gathered. He that talks of perfect happiness below, is to be regarded as one in a sleep, and pleased with a dream; and he who waking industriously seeks it, in any thing

thing besides God, is to be esteemed as one not in his right mind; whom all that see should pity, but none should imitate. True happiness was banished from this world by sin, Adam enjoyed it in his perfect state, for *God made Adam upright and pure*, Eccl. vii. 29. but the baneful fruit of the interdicted tree, vitiated his palate, robbed him of his comfort, entailed a curse on the ground and all that should come from it. The peace that Jesus brings unto his people, is the same pleasant plant that grew in Adam's nature, in his pristine state, and there and then 'till blasted by sin, was like a tree planted by rivers of water; he lived under the bedewing unction of the gracious spirit, and was refreshed by the beams of beatific rays which shone upon his soul from cloudless skies; but now 'tis an exotic, it is a foreign plant, a plant that grows in heaven, and when transplanted hither, is subject to a thousand blasts and nipping frosts. But in that land of bliss, that land of pure delight, where our all conquering captain fills the radiant throne; what may we not expect? What evil may we fear? Our blessed Lord in order as it were to lessen our esteem for earth and earthly things; and enkindle in our hearts an insatiable thirst for nobler joys, has told us in his blessed word, what we may expect as the least part of that happiness he has purchased with his blood, and is gone to take possession of, for all the chosen seed; that *ist. There shall be no night, nor darkness*, Rev. xxii. 5, 21, 23, 25. In this world we have the incessant vicissitudes of day and night, light and darkness in perpetual round succeed each other, an emblem of the mutable state to which all things here

here are subjected ; but there the sun shall rise with uneclipsing splendor, and with never setting rays shall shine upon the just. Or rather they shall need no sun, for the uncreated brightness of the refulgent *Jehovah*, shall for ever give them light ; so saith the blessed word, “ And there “ shall be no night there, and they need no candle “ neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God “ giveth them light.” Rev. xxii. 5. Here, our most necessary and delightful employment suffers frequent interruptions by the returns of night and darkness ; but there, the saints of God in the fullest sense of that prediction, “ Run without “ weariness, and walk without fainting,” in the delightful way the Lord has prepared for them to walk in ; they delight themselves in the Lord, and have an uninterrupted joy in the God of their salvation. 2dly, The *accuser of the brethren* is now cast down for ever, he that was wont to accuse them *day and night before God*. Rev. xii. 10. In this state the most eminent of God’s servants have been, and are opposed by satan ; if Job and his friends assemble themselves before God, satan the grand adversary appears in the midst of them. Job i. 6. 2. 1. For what end ? No doubt to accuse and hinder their devotion. If Joshua the high-priest come before the Lord, satan appears at his right-hand to resist him. Zech. iii. 1. When the woman travailed in birth, and pained to be delivered the great *red dragon*, the devil, stood before her to devour the child ; but in the blessed kingdom of the *Lamb*, this accuser and *true* disturber of Israel shall have place no more ; no more accusations shall be preferred, for there shall be none to accuse, nor aught to accuse of ;

of; for "the people that shall dwell there shall be forgiven their iniquity." If. xxv. 11. 3dly, Here we carry the cumbrous load of flesh and blood, and our better part is united to a frail, sickly and mortal body; the seeds of almost innumerable diseases are sown in our nature, these take deep root in us, and in spite of all our skill to prevent it ripen into mortality. Torturing pain, and emaciating sickness, fell companion! Prey upon our bodies doomed to dust, and often make life itself a burden. Oh happy regions! where *mortality* shall be *swallowed up of life*, and none of the dreadful harbingers of death shall ever come. There, says the evangelical prophet, "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." If. xxxiii. 24. No saith the spirit "nor shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." Rev. xxi. 4. Blessed Paul discoursing of the transcendent excellency of that wished-for state says, "That the corruptible body is sown in corruption, but raised in incorruption; is sown in dishonour, but raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, is raised in power; it is sown a natural body it is raised a spiritual body." 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43. And again, "He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious body." 4thly, All the trials of God's dear children shall then be over; no more shall the prince of darkness disturb their tranquil breasts by evil and blasphemous suggestions; no more shall the vain allurements and bewitching wiles of a delusive world ensnare their minds, captivate their affections, or intrude with its perplexing cares to hinder their devotions; for the *wicked* world, the *wicked* devil, and the *wicked* heart, shall

shall then *cease from troubling, and their weary souls, souls weary of the world, the devil, and of sin, shall be at rest.* Job iii. 17. Lo! this is part of that salvation, part of that happiness our blessed Lord intended for his people; but "eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God has prepared for those that love him.

The bliss of the righteous will be inconceivably rapturous and compleat, inasmuch as 5thly, They shall be with Christ; what heart desires more? What more can be desired or wished for? This would be heaven in the hottest place of hell, and heaven itself would be no place of happiness if Christ the Lord was not there. *I am ready to go with thee,* said Peter, *to prison and to death.* It was well spoken honest Peter, doubtless there was a willingness of spirit, though a weakness in the flesh, as upon trial it appeared, but with God the will, (when his children can no more than will) is accepted for the deed, and Peter was afterwards comforted by the gracious promise of the Lord, that his desire should be accomplished. "Let not your heart be troubled," said the dear Redeemer, "ye believe in God, believe also in me, in my father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that were I am there ye may be also." John xiv. 1, 2, 3. Nothing gives a greater wound to love than absence, but the presence of the beloved object creates new and sensible delight; "we love him" (is the language of every believer,) "because he first loved us." 1 John iv. 19. But this love makes the true be-
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liever so as to desire Jesus, that while absent from him *in the body*, he is as one in a strange country, and far from *home*; and his *desire* is to *depart and be with Christ*, which saith he is *better*. Our blessed Saviour knew that this was so essential a part of the happiness of his people, that he particularly prays for it in their behalf, John xvii. 24. "Father I will that they also whom thou
 "hast given me be with me where I am." God's people in this world are like ships at sea in a violent storm, but Jesus stands upon the shore, or walks to their assistance on the waves, and brings them to the peaceful port, the quiet harbour of his breast, where storms and blasts shall disturb them no more. The comfortable contemplation of this happy state, accompanied with a lively hope of the enjoyment thereof, was thought more than enough by the apostle Paul, to allay the disquietudes and counter-balance all the trials and afflictions the people at Thessalonica should be exercised with; and therefore reminds them particularly of this part of the felicity that awaited them, that they should be with Jesus; for saith he;
 "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven,
 "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel,
 "and with the trump of God; and the dead in
 "Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive
 "and remain shall be caught up together with
 "them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air,
 "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. Again, 6thly, This happiness will be heightened by an open and full vision of our adorable Saviour; the clearest views the believer has of Christ here are obscure and clouded, for
 "we now see through a glass," and therefore with
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less perspicuity, and “that darkly,” therefore cannot see in such lively strokes the beauty that ravishes the soul; but then *we shall see him face to face*. Glorious sight! To see our father, brother, benefactor, and our friend; now praised, revered, adored by all. His frowns more terrible than hell itself, will drive the dispisers of his grace, and rebels to his royalty, to seek a shelter in the thickest gloom of the tartarian shades; and gladly plunge into the hottest flames of everlasting fire, to escape the terror of his angry brow. His smiles, who can conceive the bliss? *His smiles* will transport the soul with pleasure never tasted, never known before. Jesus will then appear to be, what he has ever been esteemed by his bride, “the fairest among ten thousand fairs, and altogether lovely.” Abraham rejoiced to see his day at a distance, the day of his incarnation which was to be a time of suffering, scorn, and contempt and to issue in death; how much more will Abraham and all his faithful children rejoice to see him now exalted, sovereign *Lord*, not crowned with piercing thorns, but with a crown of light and glory. It is said of Austin that he greatly desired to have seen Christ in the *flesh*; but how will this loss be compensated by seeing him in the *spirit*; that is, having now reassumed his dignity and glory, the glory he had with the Father before the world was, and as king of kings and lord of lords, now adored by all heaven’s host; for we shall now *see him as he is*. 1 John iii. 3, one with the Father and the spirit, one co-essential undivided Lord. Once more, Jesus intending nothing short of salvation the most perfect, most consummate and complete, as the purchase of his pre-

precious blood; has assured his people as the crown of all their joys the full enjoyment of himself. Language is poor and insufficient when describing this transcendant felicity, to supply us with ideas adequate, and suitable thereto; for who can conceive how much is comprehended in that promise, *I will be to them a God*. When the great patriarchal pilgrim was called from his country and his father's house, this promise was to be his stay and support in every strange land where he should sojourn; "I will establish my covenant with thee, to be to thee a God." Gen. xvii. 7. And that he might fear no force, no famine, the Lord said unto him, ver. 1st, "I am the Almighty God, the all-sufficient God;" all thy wants shall be supplied by me, and flow from me, as the inexhaustible source of all blessings. And the fulfillment of this promise in its utmost import, is the completion of those joys reserved for the just. This beatific sight, and fruition of God is beautifully described by the royal psalmist, Ps. xvi. 11. "In thy presence is fullness of joy," joy most pure without mixture of pain; joy most full without interruption or dimunition. "At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Pleasures that never cloy, never pall upon the appetite, or lose their relish by continued enjoyment; but are pleasures still to-day, to-morrow, and for evermore. When highly favoured John saw heaven opened, in extatic vision, and heard the holy harpers in the most lofty strains adore the eternal king; it was told him, that their happiness was perfected in that "the Lord God should dwell among them;" the consequence of this would be, "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any

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“any more, neither shall the sun light on them
 “nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the
 “midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall
 “lead them to living fountains of water; and
 “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”
 Rev. vii. 16, 17. If any thing can be supposed
 to make an addition to happiness so perfect, so
 compleat, it must be this, that it is eternal.—
 Here, tides of the most consummate felicity flow
 without ebb, or intermission; pleasures in cease-
 less succession roll, and in perpetual circles run.
 The river of God is full of all the soul can wish,
 or heart conceive, whose limpid streams shall ne-
 ver, never cease to flow. How rapturous is that
 song, “Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty,
 “which was, and is, and is to come.” And how
 nobly grand and glorious is the chorus; when
 those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks,
 to him that sat on the throne, the four and twenty
 elders fall down, and worship him that liveth for
 ever and ever.

This is the salvation our blessed and adorable
 Jesus intended for his people; this is the salvation
 he has purchased for them, at the expence of his
 precious blood. This is the salvation that is no
 less certain, and insured unto them; than that the
 sacrifice made of himself in order thereto was suf-
 ficient; which has been proved in the preceding
 discourse. For if Christ's sacrifice was *propitia-*
tory, God is reconciled in him, and every believer
 in the triumphant language of the apostle Paul,
 may now say, “who shall lay any thing to the
 “charge of God's elect. It is God that justi-
 “fieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ
 “that died, yea rather that is risen again.” If

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Christ's sacrifice was *vicarious*, if he actually died in the room and stead of the sinner; by what law or justice can the sinner be obnoxious to? It is true he has offended, has contracted a debt of five thousand talents perhaps; but what of this? Jesus his surety has discharged it all. The sinner it is also true, had nothing to give him a rightful title to heaven and happiness; but Jesus his *surety* and *substitute*, the foederal head, fulfilled the law, *magnified and made it honourable*; wrought out, and brought in an *everlasting*, spotless, and compleat *righteousness*, and imputes it to the believer. If Christ's sacrifice was *complete and full*, to purchase and procure the salvation he intended for his people; the happiness of the sinner stands not upon the precarious bottom of his performances; nor is the golden crown reserved for him in glory, to be placed upon the head of an image, part gold, and part clay. It appears upon the whole, that this glorious salvation we have feebly and faintly described, is sure and certain; and sure to all that "are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." But the grand question that concerns us to be solved to the satisfaction of our own conscience, is, Am I in Christ? Have I any good ground to hope God in him is reconciled to me? Did he die for me? Have I any part in that righteousness he hath wrought out? These are questions of no small importance; and the use that should be made of all that has been said, should be to press the enquiry close upon the conscience; the assisting you in which, shall (God permitting) be the subject of another discourse.

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P E T E R, ii. 24.

*Who his own self bare our Sins, in his
own Body on the Tree.*

MAN's reason, amidst the thickest clouds of ignorance and error, has by the innate power of which it at present stands possess'd, been able though by darkly feeling after, to discover these momentous and self-evident truths: namely, that there is one great and glorious cause of all existent things, for as nothing can give what it has not, all that has a being, owes its existence, and is the effect of some first great cause. This great cause is perceptible by reason in its wonderful effects, (of which the reasoning faculty itself is not the least,) and in the things that are made reason cannot but perceive an eminent display of the eternal godhead, power and wisdom shining forth illustriously in the armies of heaven, and all created things of the earth. Reason also has the power to contemplate herself, and has long since fixed it as a law, that this mass of flesh and blood is not the thing called reason, but something far inferior to it, subjected to disease and death, and liable to corruption; but that the rea-

son, soul, or life, is incorruptible; and when the body dies must live, and think, and reason still.

This last, has received from revelation all the confirmation one could ask or wish; "we are told, "it is appointed for us, once to die, but after "that the judgment; that the body shall return "to the earth as it was, but the spirit shall return "to God that gave it;" but how the soul shall be disposed of after the dissolution of the body; whether we have any good ground to hope that our after being, will not be worse than not to be at all, is a point of solemn enquiry, and is intended to be the subject of this discourse.

That salvation, and that the most comprehensive, extensive and glorious, is certain to some, in consequence of the sacrifice made by our Saviour of himself has already been shewn; whether we are included in that number, let us now proceed to enquire. But it perhaps may not be amiss before we enter upon the principal design, to lay before you the following Cautions.

CAUTION 1st. Let none of you think it an indifferent thing whether you be in Christ or not, or sneer at a phrase so common in scripture, as an unmeaning quaint term; for the word of God knows no other way to obtain this salvation but through Christ. Christ is the *alpha* and *omega* in grace; the *author* and *finisher* of faith, the way in which a man must walk that would ever come at heaven; the *truth*, by which alone a man can be directed to believe and act aright; the *life*, which animates and impowers a feeble saint to stand as the *beaten anvil* to the *stroke*, amidst all the opposition, discouragements and trials he is exercised with, in his way to the kingdom. Do not

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not think that *regeneration, faith, justification, &c.* are words without meaning; and that if you do but live quiet and peaceable lives, be honest and upright in your dealings, &c. nothing more is required to give you a title to glory. The bible would be the most unintelligible book in the world if this was true; and be so far from being level to the capacity of a *wayfaring man*, that the most wise and subtle doctor, must learn it's meaning, in something foreign to it's precepts. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3. "Without faith it is impossible to please him." Heb xi. 6. And, "he that believes not, is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36. "Yea, he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16. Again, "He that believeth on this man is justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts xiii. 39. "but there is no other name given under heaven among men by which he we can be saved." Ch. iv. 12. Therefore I say, think it not an indifferent thing whether you be in Christ or no, for *we are accepted in the beloved*, and in him only.

Caution 2d. Think not the enquiry I am about to lead you into a matter of mere indifference, and that a matter of fact will be the same, as to the truth of it, whether you know it or no; for first, your indifference about it, and unwillingness to enter upon it, bears a bad aspect on your supposed grace; it being the desire of a gracious soul to know the worst of itself, and to have all sin detected and laid open, "Search me O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts."

H 3

said

said holy David. Ps. cxxxix. 23. 2d. If upon impartial and pious enquiry you are found yet afar off from Christ; you are yet on earth, not in hell; you are in the house of God, not at his awful bar; and it is much more desirable to have mistakes of infinite concern discovered, while it is possible they may be corrected, than to be of that number hereafter, who shall cry *Lord, Lord, open to us*, and be repulsed with those awful words, *I know you not*. 3d. If upon examination you have some good ground to hope that all is well with you, this will open to you a fresh source of consolation, will inspire you with a kind of new life, animate you with renewed courage to take the field against your spiritual foes, and give you boldness in the presence of your friends. What can be more cheering to a soldier in the doubtful field, than for his captain to come and assure him of victory. So the feeblest saint being found in Jesus, shall be mighty through him to sustain the fiercest opposition, and obtain the crown.

Caution 3d. In this important enquiry, I intreat you trust not to a peradventure, if greater certainty can be obtained; for remember your peradventure, may preponderate either way; perhaps it is so; but perhaps it is not so; and then you are undone for ever. Men do not chuse to rest the little affairs of this life on a doubtful bottom, but endeavour so to secure their estates and properties that none may have power to wrest them out of their hands: and should you be less careful for salvation? We read of some, that had attained *a good degree of boldness* in the Lord, and had a strong *assurance* that he was their God. Holy David says, "I fought the Lord and he
" heard

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“heard me, and delivered me out of all my fear.” Pf. xxxiv. 4. And in confidence of this faith, “I will not fear though an host of men should encamp against me.” Pf. xxviii. 3. The beloved apostle faith, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, and we know that we are of God.” 1 John iii. 14, 5, 19. Since therefore more is attainable than a bare perhaps, or peradventure, rest not satisfied with this; but earnestly seek for that greater certainty.

Caution 4th. Take heed of measuring yourself by another man’s measure; of making the stature of your friend or neighbour the standard of your christianity; or of weighing yourself in the uncertain scales, of any supposed good man. For 1st. We have no reason to believe that our acceptance will depend on our comparative goodness, and that because another is more wicked than myself, or less righteous, therefore I shall be saved; which reasoning were it true, would allot salvation to all but the worst. 2d. Nor will it be safe for you to make the stature of your friend, or neighbour, your standard for christianity; for 1st. It is possible the person you fix for your pattern, may be a very dwarf in grace, or perhaps have no grace at all; and then you are in danger of taking up with the shadow, the mere skeleton of religion, and live and die a stranger to the substance; and then you’re ruined. 2d. Or if the person you fix on for your rule be wild and extravagant in his notions, having modelled them in his own imagination, and not according to the pattern given in the mount; and will allow no grace to have place in your heart, so long as you feel any motions of sin, or that you can be born
of

of God while one sinful thought remains; you will be in danger of depreciating the grace you already may partake of, and of indulging the most desponding, and disquieting thoughts concerning your final state. Or should he be one who largely partakes of the grace of God, and is grounded and settled in the faith; you may be led to conclude that because you are not a father, you are not a child, and because you cannot perform the feats of a strong man, that you have no strength at all, nor partake of the nature of man. Again 3dly. You should not weigh yourself in the scale of any supposed good man, 1st, because it is a difficult matter for us truly to know ourselves, much more to know one another; he whom you suppose to be a good man, may possibly in the eye of God be much the reverse.

None but our Saviour could certainly know that the Pharisees in his day, who made so great a show of religion, were but like whited sepulchres; and while they had a fair outside, were all uncleanness within: and your danger in copying after such a one, is too great not to warn you of. But should he be all that you suppose him, it will be quite unsafe for you implicitly to follow him; for as you attempt to copy his virtues, you may unawares be led to imitate his vices; "for there is not a just man upon earth that doth good, and sinneth not." Eccles. vii. 20.

Caut. 5th. In seeking to know how it stands between God and your precious souls, take good heed that your own hearts do not deceive you; the heart says the prophet "is desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things." We would generally construct our own case in the most favourable

avourable manner, and prophecy smooth things to ourselves. But alas this is a great vanity, for if our case be not really good, our fondness for self will not profit; nor will our soothed falsehood, by any of our selfish acts become a truth. In this enquiry a sincerity and faithfulness proportioned to the importance of the subject, should run through the whole undertaking; and lest we should mistake our case and state after all, we should with the royal saint, pray that the Lord would search us, that he would *look well, and lead us into the way everlasting.*

CAUT. 6th. Let nothing determine your case, but conscience in concurrence with the word of God. When you begin to enquire into the grounds of your hope of salvation come strip as much as possible of all pre-conceived notions and opinions; the prejudices of party, and of education, have a mighty influence upon us. Precepts and principles sucked in with the milk, incorporate themselves with our flesh and bones as it were, and are hardly eradicated, yea are with much difficulty subdued and corrected with maturest reason. Yet as much as may, be forgetting all you have heard, and disregarding all you have learned; come simply as a sinner to know from God's own mouth, as it were, what you must do to be saved; and whether from what you know, or have perceived of yourself, you have any just cause to hope that you are a child of God.

Having laid before you these cautions which I beg your attention to; I go on to assist you in the enquiry; only permit me to observe, that the question to be put, is not, "Do I know that Christ has loved me, and has given himself for me;" nor, "Do

“ Do I know the time when, the place where, or
 “ the manner how.” All which, although they
 may be true in the experience of some, yet are by
 no means to be insisted on as the common stand-
 ard for all. But the grand question in the pre-
 sent enquiry is, “ Have I any good ground from
 “ God’s infallible word to believe that I am born
 “ of God ?”

Regeneration, is the first beginning of the spi-
 ritual life, all that precedes it, is from nature,
 and is defiled, and rendered loathsome by sin.
 The very prayers of the unregenerate, are but
 hideous howlings in the ears of God ; for it is
 impossible they can be sincere, or have any thing
 truly spiritual in them, where all is corrupt and
 defiled, from whence true prayer can proceed.
 Prayer is a pious breathing of the soul after God,
 but it must argue a gross misconception of our
 natural state, and great inattention to the scrip-
 tural account of our condition, to suppose a soul
 sincerely suing for help, and succour, to that God,
 whom it naturally hates, and to whose most pure
 and perfect law, it scorns to submit. Rom. viii.
 7. The above assertion however severe it may
 seem, is well supported by holy writ ; “ The sa-
 “ crifices of the wicked are an abomination to the
 “ Lord.” Prov. xv. 8. And, “ much more
 “ when they are presented with a wicked mind.”
 Ch. xxi. 27. Such an offerer, saith the prophet Is.
 lxvi. 3, “ is as a murderer in God’s sight when he
 “ killeth an ox, or if he offer a lamb, it is as if
 “ he cut off a dog’s neck ;” a creature so vile under
 the law that it was not redeemable.

Our blessed Lord in his pilgrimage below, once
 said, “ the days shall come, when the dead shall hear
 “ the

“ the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear
“ shall live ;” one of these blessed days Saul of
Tarsus saw, when filled with rage and madness
against the followers of Jesus he obtained letters
from the high priest to Damascus, that he might
bring to prison and death, all that he found in
that way.

It does not appear that all his pharisaical holi-
ness, had any root but that of corrupt nature ; and
where the tree is not first made good, it is in vain
to expect any fruit but bad. It is highly proba-
ble, that life-giving word, which the Lord Jesus
spake, was the first beginning of spiritual life in
his soul ; and now it is said of him to Annanias,
Behold he prayeth. Acts ix. 11. When Peter
preached on the day of pentecost, and the blessed
spirit accompanied his word with an extraordi-
nary power, brooding over the dark and uninform-
ed hearts of those that heard ; they began imme-
diately to breathe the serious and pious enquiry,
men and brethren what shall we do ? Acts ii. 37.

From these instances you may observe what is
the first and lowest degree of the spiritual life ; a
pious breathing, and an holy hungering after God.
The incorruptible seed thus sown in the heart,
sometimes like seed cast into the ground in win-
ter, lies buried as it were beneath the rubbish of
the carnal, sensual and earthly mind ; and is
scarcely seen to bud or blossom in any holy duty,
by reason of a multitude of discouragements on
one hand, and manifold allurements on the o-
ther.

It is in this state the soul seems suspended
betwixt hope and fear, desiring yet distrusting,
determined to follow after, yet almost deterred ;
the

the fear of man, the love of fame, and the things of this present life, seem at sometimes to have gotten quiet the upper hand; and if a desire after God remains at all, it appears so weak and enfeebled, that it is scarce perceptible. Yet remember, O thou feeble one, *Jesus does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax*; thou dost not yet perhaps break forth into a flame of love for Christ; but there can be fire without flame; it may be thou perceivest no fire, for all is cold within; yet there may be smok where neither fire nor flame appear; and *Jesus will not quench it*. The seed sown in the heart, is like a spark dropt into the sea; but it is a spark from Jesus, a spark of heavenly love, and many waters cannot quench it. The seed sown in the heart is *incorruptible*; it is a living and life-giving principle, and although like a grain of mustard-seed, yet shall it grow to a large tree in glory.

2d. The work of grace has appeared in some in the first stages of life; they have longed for God, delighted in his word, and in every pious path; have bowed in secret at his footstool, and sought where to weep before him in secret, and pour out the tender soul in fervent prayer at a throne of grace. Such a devout disposition has appeared perhaps for many years, and after this, all has seemed cold and dead and entirely lost. Yet you must observe, where the soul is truly regenerate and born of the spirit; conviction and remorse, will still follow the soul, and imbitter all it's sweets; will frequently extort and force it to resolve to turn again to God. The conscience of such person, will never fail to visit him when alone; if he runs all day from God, God's vicegerent

gerent will be sure to meet with him at night; nor can the soul thus born of God go on in sin, but he will be wounded in the very act; nor will his bleeding conscience ever suffer him to be at rest, 'till he is brought to bewail his sins, and humbly confess his wickedness, lying at the feet of the bleeding Jesus.

If you should ask a person in this state, how it is he can be pleased with sin, and slight and neglect the service of the Lord? His answer would be, that he is so far from taking pleasure in sin, that he hates it from his very soul; and is far from allowing that which he does; and although says he "I confess with shame that I neglect the service of God, and hereby may seem to slight it, yet, *I delight in his law after the inner man*," for saith he, *it is not I that do evil, (inasmuch as I condemn, and disallow it) but sin that dwelleth in me.*"

3dly. When the heavenly wind breaths new life into the soul, it infuses a most excellent antidote for expelling that diabolical poison of pride out of the heart; for such an one conceives himself to be the vilest creature upon earth; and many in this view of themselves could have been glad had it been possible, to have changed their condition with the meanest animal or vilest reptile. Holy David says of himself, *I am a very worm, and no man*; blessed Paul, *I am the chief of sinners*; and the publican in the temple, from a conception of his own unworthiness, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven; but smote upon his breast, saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner.* Little do poor trembling sinners think what gracious purposes of love, the Lord has at that

that time towards them, and what a foundation he is laying in their hearts for a glorious eternity.

How hard it is to persuade *these poor in spirit, that theirs is the kingdom of God*; whereas in fact, they are blessed, while they mourn that blessing is so far from them, and while they seem to seek an absent God, God sets up his tabernacle with them, and in them. How full of consolation, and how pertinent to this, are the words of Is. ch. lvii. 15. "I dwell, saith the Lord, in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." It is the property of grace to humble the haughtiness of man, and the higher a person rises in the attainment of this, the lower he will always sink in his own esteem; it was wisely therefore said of one, "we must go down to come at heaven," that is, down in our own eyes. I suppose while I am speaking thus, you are ready to ask, What was the publican then you have just mentioned, and who manifested so great signs of humility, such an abundant partaker of grace? I answer, that he had grace cannot be denied; for without this he could not possibly have seen his own deformity, for darkness discovers not darkness, *but whatsoever maketh manifest is light*. Again, it is certain he had more grace than the boasting pharisee, whose haughty heart, a stranger to grace, disdained him; for *he went down to his house justified rather than the other*; but had both been destitute of grace, there could have been no reason for preference. Again, as the publican was a partaker of grace, he must have been regenerate, since all grace in action, is the effect of the spirit's work upon the soul,

soul, and there is no work of the spirit, previous
 to the work of regeneration.

4thly, When the divine light shines into the
 soul, and leads a sinner to the knowledge of him-
 self, he presently begins to set at nought and loath
 his own righteousness, for, says he, "I have it
 is true, had a form of godliness, I have read
 the scriptures, and heard the word preached at
 almost every opportunity; I also have prayed
 with my family, and have been careful to sup-
 port a good character in the world; I have dis-
 charged my just debts, and often relieved the
 necessitous. But continues he, I did all these
 things from a principle of love to myself, and
 not to God; I should at any time have been
 glad he would have dispensed with the services
 I did; for I had no pleasure in the work, my
 eye was upon the wages; and could I have
 been assured in any moderate degree, that hea-
 ven could have been obtained without this shew
 of holiness, I should presently have relinquished
 a labour I had so little love to." Besides, adds he,
 I am now convinced, that if it had been possible
 my works could have been done in sincerity, and
 with an eye to God's glory, the very best of them
 would have been of no avail; seeing they were
 not only defiled as proceeding from a nature so
 corrupt, but were at best so exceedingly imper-
 fect and deficient; they might it is true carry an
 aspect of dignity, when in competition with my
 fellow-worms, but when weighed in the balance
 of the sanctuary, they would have been found
 altogether lighter than vanity." Thus a soul en-
 lightened by the spirit of God exclaims against all
 its imaginary goodness, and self-laboured work,
 where

wherein it has been exercised; for it now appears that all such *righteousnesses were but filthy rags*, and this apparent *goodness was but like the morning dew*. Such person is now led to trace back these streams of various action to the fountain head, an evil and corrupt heart; and then perceives, they must needs be all alike impure, for they had issued from one fountain; which could not send forth both sweet and bitter streams.

Here he makes a stand, and surveys himself by a sight shining from above, and sees his nature all corrupt, defiled and unclean; and that there is no sound part, from the crown of the head, to the soles of the feet; there is nothing *but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores*, which have not at all been bound up, neither *mollified with ointment*. He now appears to himself to be at once a miracle of sin, and a miracle of mercy; he has nothing to plead in his own behalf, but being found guilty, is constrained to confess, *I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men*. He can no longer think of repairing the breaches, because he sees himself altogether helpless, and is constrained to own, *I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing*.

Now how difficult it is to persuade one in this case, that the seeds of immortality are really sown in his nature, and that these are the buddings of heavenly glory hereafter to be perfected in his soul; yet what can be more certain; he did not always see himself in this condition, because he had no light whereby to see; and unless it could be supposed, that the soul sees, and knows, and tastes, before it lives; all which is grossly absurd, it follows, that spiritual life is begun, such a

soul

soul is regenerate, born of God, and shall not come into condemnation.

It is objected here, that many have had strong desires, and earnest wishes for salvation, with some degrees of joy and comfort in the means of obtaining it, who in all human probability died impenitent, were these regenerated and born of God? It is readily granted that many have desired salvation, and earnestly wished for heaven, whose desires and wishes did in no wise spring from true grace in the heart; but from the stings of natural conscience, and the fears arising herefrom, of after misery. This is very common when persons are either alarmed with some sudden, striking, and unexpected providence; or when threatened with death and the awful thoughts of a future state, to which before time, they had too little attended. Self-love, naturally prompts to self-preservation, and the apprehensions of danger, naturally rouse the most careless, and supine to seek security; but who can be so inattentive as not to observe daily some of these, raised from sick beds, snatched by a kind of miracle from the yawning grave, or thrown into the greatest commotions by the death of a friend, or relation, or some unexpected and afflictive providence, or threatening calamity, returning at the removal of the rod like a dog to its vomit, or a swine to its wallowing in the mire. It is no uncommon thing for persons to wish for heaven, who have no relish for holiness on earth, nor could possibly find any satisfaction there, were it possible, they could be indulged in their vain desires; the paradise spoken of by Mahomet, might suit their unrenewed taste, but the holy, sublime, spiritual, and exalted pleasures, the chris-

tian hopes for, would yield nothing of comfort to the carnal mind; for *as the natural man discerns not the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritual*, for the same reason it is, they are empty and unsatisfactory to him.

Again, we have good authority to affirm, that some may hear the word with joy, and immediately produce some signs of grace, and yet are not regenerated; the seed did but fall on *stony ground*. Yea some may for a season run well, and apparently produce more fruit than others, who produce better; and yet bring nothing to perfection; the seed fell *among thorns*, and is choked. Whereas, the truly regenerate hear and understand the word; receive it cordially, and bear fruit to perfection.

5thly. Where the spirit of God has begun a work upon the heart, he so humbles it from a sight of its own helplessness, that the person is willing and desirous to be saved any way infinite wisdom shall appoint, for *he is now made willing in the day of God's power*, and the language of his heart is, *Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?* When Jesus Christ is holden forth to him in the gospel, as every way sufficient to relieve and save him, he presently sees such a suitableness in him, to his forlorn condition, that he longs to embrace him, and is content to cast himself upon him; and this is an act of faith, in the first, or lowest degree. As a new born child, can receive no kind of food so suitable for nourishment as milk, so the new born child of God, can receive no food or nourishment so agreeable, and strengthening, to the spiritual nature it now partakes of, as the word of God; called by the Apostle, *the sincere milk of the word*. The reason of this is, because the word,

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word, is the word of God, concerning Jesus Christ; *it is the gospel of his son*, and salvation to sinners through him; and as salvation is by faith, so the foundation of faith is the word, *for faith comes by hearing* this word, the word of God. Such person now renounces (for the reasons before mentioned) all his own righteousnesses as filthy and vile, and rejoices in the righteousness of Christ holden forth in the gospel; therefore he willingly takes Jesus for his priest, by whose sacrifice his sins are expiated, and who being now entered into the holy of holies, takes away the iniquity of his holy things.

He has now an ear open to instruction, and is convinced of his own foolishness, for, says he, *I was even as a beast before thee*; he asks wisdom from above, and the language of his heart is, *speak Lord, for thy servant heareth*. Christ is now gladly accepted in the character, and office of a prophet; and the words of his mouth are sweeter than honey, or the honey-comb to his taste; he like *Mary* sits at the master's feet, and catcheth with pleasure the words that have fallen from his gracious lips, and are, as dictated by his blessed spirit left on record in his book. Tell this man that the *Messiah* must reign, and subdue all his foes; it is well says he, "I am content that he rule over me and in me; I am taught in his word that *his yoke is easy, and his precepts are not grievous*." Thus the weakest babe in Christ, receives him, in the fulness of his offices as impartially, and extensively, as the aged father; and the lowest degree of faith, as salvifically, as the strongest believer: for grace in the smallest degree, as it is the effect of regeneration; and

the lowest degree of faith, as it is an act of the living soul, indicates such a divine work begun from the mere good pleasure of God, as his word and promise (humbly be it spoken,) will engage him to perform.

In these few particulars, you may perceive my design was, to point out and describe, not the young man, or the father in Christ, but the babe, in order to strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; for if there be any good and solid ground, for *these* to build their hopes upon; the case of *those* who are more grown in grace, are more strong in faith, and who abound much in love, is less difficult to speak to, and their condition more comfortable, though not more safe.

Since therefore salvation is most certainly secured by Christ, and that a salvation most inestimable and glorious, and that even babes in him are not excluded from the fulness thereof; I shall conclude the subject with advice, 1st. To babes in Christ, or to the weakest in faith. 2^d. To the young man in Christ, or those more strong in the faith. 3^dly. To the fathers in Christ, or such as are stablished, strengthened, settled.

1st. To you whose condition I have been labouring to describe, and whose consolation is, what I principally aim; permit me to address you in the angel's word to Mary, "*Hail*, highly favoured
" are ye, blessed among men, blessed among wo-
" men, for the Lord hath blessed you, and ye
" shall be blest. Ye are poor in spirit, and the
" kingdom of heaven is yours;" ye mourn under
a deep sense of sin, "blessed are ye, for ye shall
" be comforted," with a more clear and full dis-
covery

covery of the loving-kindness of the Lord unto you here, and an everlasting fruition of him hereafter. This is a comfortable truth, I would have you often meditate upon, that being children of God, although but new-born babes, ye are really and truly heirs; *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*. The king's son is as much a prince when lying in his cradle, and fretting and fuming with childish inquietudes, and as truly an heir to the crown and dignity of his father, as when he rides in the royal chariot with all the distinguishing marks of majesty, and engages the attention of the applauding throng. You rob and deprive yourself of the happiness you are heirs of, and of the comforts to which you are entitled by your second birth, by not settling the persuasion of your condition in your heart; and because at present you are not kings possessed of all power and glory, ye refuse to rejoice in the privileges and blessings of being the king's son. You now labour under many trials and difficulties, and are exercised with various and sore temptations; but call to mind the peaceful, blisful state that is reserved for you, reserved in heaven, even *an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*; there the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest; no temptation, nor trial shall molest you there, no doubts, no fears, no unbelief, or hardness of heart, shall grieve your peaceful souls; but Jesus whom ye now so much desire, will feed you with his love, enkindle heavenly raptures in your hearts, by the smiles of his blessed face, and ye shall be with him for ever and ever.

Again, while you are sojourning here below as

strangers in a strange land, often think how great your happiness and safety is, in that God is your father; more careful, more indulgent and tender, than any of your fathers by the flesh, and infinitely better able to administer to all your wants; his eyes are always upon you, that he therewith may guide you in the way that he shall chuse; his merciful ears are ever open to your prayers, he marks your sighs, notes down your groans, and treasures up your penitent tears in his bottle. What power therefore shall prevail against you when omnipotence is your guard; or who shall bring your souls into condemnation, which are bought with blood divine, and acquitted by the righteous sentence of the judge of all the earth? Think often on those comfortable words of our blessed Lord, *fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*; and if it be his gracious and unalterable purpose to give the greater, will he withhold the less? No, in no wise *thy bread and thy water, thy wool and thy flax*, saith the prophet, *shall be sure unto thee*, and your God and Father will give grace, and glory too, and every good thing to them that walk uprightly.

Again, how highly are ye honoured, and how securely kept, in that the heavenly warriors have the care of you; for saith the psalmist, *the angels of the Lord pitch their tents round about those that fear him*, to guard and guide you in your way to your Father's house in heaven; for, *they are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation*; although an host therefore should rise up against you, and although you have no wisdom or might to go out against them; *let not your hearts be troubled*, neither be ye afraid, for *the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*, and ye shall be

be safe beneath the shadow of his wings. And are ye then made new creatures in Christ Jesus? Marvellous mercy, undeserved grace! *What manner of love is this the Father hath bestowed upon you, that ye should be called the Sons of God!* How does it concern and behove ye to walk worthy of so high a relation; never let the remembrance of the Lord's kind and gracious dealings with you, for one moment be forgotten by you. If a child born of noble parents is thought by wicked and profligate courses to dishonour his family and pedigree; how much more should you think it a brand of infamy and disgrace on that name by which ye are called, when by evil practices you deviate from the ways of holiness. Often call to mind your own dark state and condition, in which the Lord found you, and first in mercy looked upon you; what might you yet probably, nay certainly have been to this day, if sovereign grace, free and mighty had not delivered you; plucking you as brands from the burning; doubtless like others you had still been going on in the ways of sin and death, *wretched, poor, miserable, blind, and naked*, without the knowledge of your state, or concern to be delivered from it.

Often think of the undeserved love of that blessed Jesus who did so freely die, and lay down his precious life, emptying all his veins of that invaluable blood that circulated in them, a ransom price for your never dying souls; his tender heart was big with love and strange affection, to rebellious creatures; and when in you, O think upon it, when in you, O wonder at it! there was no form or comeliness to recommend you, no virtue

true or goodness to plead for you; but even *when ye were enemies*, did the dear Redeemer die to reconcile you to God, and bring you back to heaven. Once more, you are children, born of the spirit, and quickened by grace, therefore the inheritance is certain; yet let me advise you to use with a religious sincerity all means for obtaining more light, more life, more joy, more love to God and all his ways, a greater degree of faith, and a more comfortable assurance of hope. Remember our blessed Lord says, *I came into the world that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly*; labour therefore to grow in grace and in the knowledge of God, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; go on through the spirit to mortify the deeds of the body, so shall ye live; *add to your faith*, weak as it may be supposed to be, *virtue, and to virtue knowledge*, and every other grace; so shall ye see more clearly what is the Lord's good pleasure concerning you, ye shall not stumble, at any dark dispensation, but your *calling and election shall be made sure* unto you.

I would next drop a word of advice to the young men in Christ, may it be a word in season, and furthered with the blessing of heaven.

I write to you young men, saith the apostle John, *because ye have overcome the wicked one*, ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and are not strangers to the love of our dying Redeemer; yet are ye not out of the reach of temptation, nor secure beyond the possibility of falling; nay, you cannot entertain such a thought, but it is an argument that you are fallen already from that state of humility, and continual dependance which the
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christian ought always to walk in. Ye stand by faith, be not high-minded, but take heed lest ye fall; the world, the flesh and the devil, are as far from being reconciled to you as christians, as when you first declared war against them, and turned your backs upon them; and whilst the enmity exists, the design to hurt will never die. Arm yourselves, therefore, that you may stand in the evil day, with the whole armour of God, yea with the mind that was in Christ; be humble and watchful, and the God of all grace, will give you more grace, and make you as the beaten anvil to the blow. See that ye set not up yourselves in your own esteem above others of your brethren, but think meanly of yourselves as ye ought; despise not those that are weak in the faith, nor discourage them by boasting of your superior attainments; which will be so far from convincing your brethren of the abundance of your grace, that it may give them just cause to doubt the truth of it.

Again, let your hearts be much engaged with God, be diligent in the use of all means, that herein the babes may imitate you, and hereby may be encouraged in respect to their own state; when they perceive you to draw your comforts from the only source of bliss, and that you have no strength or power but as it is in God.

Moreover, as a youth that is an heir to a plentiful fortune, when about to enter on the possession of it, would carefully examine the writings by which the inheritance is conveyed; so be ye above all things particularly conversant with the word of God; read it by day, meditate thereon by night, and let it be precious in your esteem,
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above gold, and rubies. This blessed word informs you of your title to the heavenly inheritance; sets forth before you the inconceivable bliss that is reserved for you; therefore this word is a sin-killing, and soul-quickenng word; for while your hearts are meditating on these blessings, your affections will be apt to catch the fire, and your whole soul to be drawn out with desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ in glory.

A word to the fathers, and I have done, such as the apostle Peter speaking of, says, "Now the God of all grace, who hath called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

By the apostle's prayer here we learn, first, That all grace is from God, as the source and fountain thereof. Second, That God calls his people to eternal glory, when this short and troublesome life is over. Third, That this is to be obtained by Jesus Christ. Fourth, That the way to glory is through suffering. But, fifth, That this shall issue in their welfare that are thus called, for hereby, God will *perfect* them. There is a deficiency in the greatest saints, so long as they are in the body, but God will not leave the work undone, Zerubbabel's hands have laid the foundation of the superstructure, and his hands shall finish it. *Stablish*, in a pious path in which they shall walk without weariness, or fainting. *Strengthen*, in faith, and hope, and every grace. *Settle*, in their everlasting habitation, from which there shall be no remove. Is it so that your hearts are as it were seasoned with grace? Let your song be, *The Lord hath done great things for us*; let your hearts

hearts continually rejoice in him; be talking of all his wondrous works, and telling abroad his salvation from day to day.

Give proof to all that behold you, that you largely partake of the grace of God, by pressing forward towards the mark for the prize of your high-calling, the crown of glory that fadeth not away; great grace will greatly desire grace, and there is no period at which a gracious soul may stop and say, I am perfect in grace, perfect in holiness, and pure from sin; except as every true believer is *complete in Christ*.

Be ye patterns to your brethren in the Lord; in faith, in patience, and in brotherly affection; always bearing in mind, that grace manifests itself most in an humble deportment; ye cannot possibly forget whilst ye are in the body, that the character best suiting you is, a ransomed sinner; a sinner still, though saved by grace; yet one who has continual need to come to the fountain opened, and whoever wants to have his best performances washed in the blood of the Lamb, and who at all times needs Jesus the high-priest to bear the iniquity of his holy things. Thus go ye on untill mortality shall be swallowed of life, all sin and imperfection shall be done away, and ye stand with much boldness before the throne, made clean through the blood, and adorned in the righteousness of the adorable Jesus, and join the heavenly harps in a song of salvation, glory, power, and dominion to God and the Lamb.

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S E R M O N VI.

I S A I A H xlv. 24.

*Surely shall one say in the Lord have I
righteousness and strength.*

GOD made man in *his own image*, in the image of his holiness, and placed him in the garden his own hands had planted; a place of complete and perfect happiness; he wrote his law in his heart, and his obligations to love his munificent creator as the chiefest good, and from whom he derived his being, and his blessings were impressed upon his mind. Moreover the Lord was pleased in much condescension and goodness to enter into covenant with his new-made creature, engaging (by a promise implied in the threatening) not only a continuation of that blessedness he now partook of, but it is highly probable, a state of much more exalted felicity and glory, after full proof should have been given of his obedience; and of which, his abstaining from the interdicted tree was now to be the test.

But *Adam being in honor continued not long*, for transgressing the command, he forfeited all the favours that had been conferred upon him, and which he only had any right to expect in consequence

quence of his obedience; and became obnoxious (as the natural and federal head of all his posterity) to all the evils comprehended in the curse, with which his disobedience had been threatened. And now it was that sovereign grace and mercy first appeared, and manifested in the promised seed, the LOVE the EVERLASTING LOVE OF GOD, whose length, and breadth, and depth, and height, is too vast and immense for angels to measure, or any created mind to comprehend. There was now no longer access to the tree of life, the rubin and a flaming sword guarded it on every side; an awful but instructive emblem this, that sin had made such a separation between God, the source of true life and the sinner, that there could be no access unto him, until his wrathful indignation signified by the flaming sword, should be removed, and his justice satisfied in the fulfillment of the promise then made concerning the mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, who by the shedding of his blood should expiate sin, and bring in an everlasting righteousness.

Notwithstanding the covenant of works was now entirely broken, and a new and living way was exhibited for access to God, even by a better covenant, and which was established upon better promises, yet all the sons of Adam are still warping to the old way, and follow after righteousness by the works of the law. Christ Jesus and his blessed gospel has always been an occasion of stumbling to the Jew, and matter of foolishness to the Greek; and the language of every man's heart until subdued by sovereign grace, is, *we will not have this man to reign over us.* The kings of the earth, (saith holy David) set themselves, and the rulers

rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, his Christ: but the purpose of the Lord shall stand, for saith he, I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. The heathen may rage, and the people imagine vanity, but the only begotten son shall reign, the nations shall be subdued beneath him, and he shall break the opposers of his kingdom with an iron rod, and dash them in pieces like a Potter's vessel. The Lord will here or hereafter be acknowledged to be God; and the stubborn rebel that refuses to kiss the golden sceptre of his grace, shall smart beneath the iron rod of his vindictive justice; for "Lo! he cometh with clouds and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him, and all nations shall wail because of him;" Jesus, first or last, will be exalted, and his blessed gospel must either be a favour of life unto life, or of death unto death.

The paragraph of which my text is a part, presents us with a most striking declaration of *Jebo-vah's* resolution to vindicate his injured honour among the heathen, and to be had in reverence of all his people; and having opposed himself as the one only living and true God, to the falsely called Gods of the nations, he exhorteth them to look to him for salvation as their only Saviour, besides whom there was not any other, ver. 22.

For this is the settled and invariable purpose of the unchangeable GOD, I have sworn, by myself, a greater, an equal, he could not swear by, for "who shall be compared unto the Lord? The word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return," hath the Lord said it, and shall he not do it? Hath he sworn and shall it not come to pass? Yes, verily, heaven and earth

earth must pass away, but his word is sure. And what is the Lord's purpose? Here it ye sons of pride; the haughty head must bow; the stubborn knee must bend, and every tongue must confess to God, *for unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.* The boasting Pharisee may plume and pride himself in his own imaginary and superior holiness, may look down with contempt and scorn on others; but he must be taught and told, for the Lord "will declare his righteousness, and his works, for they shall not profit him." Is. lvii, 12. The humbled soul shall swear, and the substance of his oath shall be, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.*

The text speaks of two special blessings, *righteousness*, and *strength*, and the manner of possessing them is, *in the Lord.* Righteousness as used in the sacred scriptures, is a term of various import, sometimes signifying God's righteousness or the standard of his holiness as holden forth in his most pure and perfect law. Ps. cxix, 142, "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness." xxxvi, 6, "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains." Sometimes the word righteousness signifieth man's righteousness, or the measure of obedience he presents as adequate to God's righteousness, and answerable to the demands of his most perfect law. Such was the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees which our Lord sets forth as imperfect and deficient, Math. v. 20, and concerning which the prophet Isaiah says, *they shall not profit thee.* And elsewhere by righteousness is signified that righteousness which our blessed Saviour wrought out in his most holy life, which is also imputed to the believer, and which is every way

may adequate and correspondent to that law which like that of the Medes and Persians admits of no alteration, nor accepts of any imperfection. And in this sense we read, 2 Cor. v. 21. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." This is the righteousness the great apostle prayed to be found in Phillip. iii. 9, in opposition to his own legal righteousness; "that I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God by faith." And this I presume is the *righteousness* spoken of in my text, and concerning the excellency of which, I would observe unto you the following things.

1st. This *righteousness* is perfect and compleat; nor could the law of God dispense with any thing short of this, but curses the offender who is deficient in one point, and brings him in guilty of a violation of the whole. Man is unable to perform such obedience, and not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them, is obnoxious to it's anathema; hence "God sending his son into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Rom. viii. 3, 4. and ch. x. 3, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The dear Jesus is said by the prophet Daniel, "to bring in an everlasting righteousness, ch. ix. 24. and the obedience he paid to the law of God was so perfect

perfect and complete, that he is thereby said to have *magnified and made it honourable*.

Now the *super-eminent excellency* of this *righteousness* appears, in that the vilest sinner, the most sturdy rebel against his God and king, possessest thereof thro' a gracious imputation by faith, can stand with boldness before his judge, nor fear the threatenings of the injured law; but being now *accepted through the beloved*; and having *redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins*, he has *peace with God*, and access by *faith* unto a throne of grace.

2dly, This *righteousness* is pure and spotless; it were much easier to descry spots and flaws in the mid-day sun, than to discover any defect or imperfection in the sinless obedience of our blessed Lord; he was as a *Lamb without blemish and without spot* in his holy nature, nor was his conversation chargeable with insincerity or guile, for *he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth*. The sinner adorned therefore with this spotless robe, we need not be surprized to hear the bridegroom say, *thou art all fair my love there is no spot in thee*; the king now has *pleasure in her beauty*, for she is *presented to him in raiment of needle-work, her cloathing is of wrought gold*. This is the wedding garment which every accepted guest will be found to have on, and without which, there will be no admission into the marriage-chamber, nor acceptance by the master of the feast. This is the blessing spoken of in my text, a *righteousness* to justify the sinner, a *righteousness* to adorn the saint, and which all who possess shall say, *surely in the Lord, have I this righteousness*.

Again, this *righteousness* stands connected with

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the blessing of *strength*, the valuableness of which, is best known to a child of God, who above all others is conscious of his own impotency and weakness. By *this*, he is enabled to withstand the allurements of the world, the opposition of wicked and ungodly men; and like David through this the *strength* of his God, he can overtop every wall of difficulty that encompasses him about. By *this*, he is upheld under all his conscious weakness, and however assaulted with doubts and fears, or bowed down by huge mountains of unbelief, he still takes hold of the *strength* of God, and finds himself supported, so that in the language and spirit of the apostle he can say, *when I am weak, then I am strong*. It is in this *strength* the believer goes on to perform every holy duty, to mortify sin and sensual desire, to restrain and subdue every domineering lust and imagination, that would exalt itself against the knowledge of Christ. Such are the blessings spoken of in the text, the manner of possessing which, is *in the Lord*.

This phrase here, may either signify, 1st, the covenant relation in which the believer stands to Christ, and then he has a legal claim to the blessings and all the effects thereof, in consequence of Christ the federal head's having fulfilled all the articles and conditions of the covenant; and hence is that contrast between the first and second Adam, Rom. v. 12—20, in which the disobedience of the former imputed to his posterity renders them obnoxious to condemnation, and the obedience of the latter imputed to the children gives them a claim to justification and life. Or, 2^{dly}, the relative union that subsists between Christ and the believer, and whereby *this* is right-fully

fully intitled to the blessings and benefits resulting from the death of *that*; which union is taken notice of in these words, "Thy maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name." Is. liv. 5, and "thou shalt call me Ishi (that is my husband,) and "thou shalt no more call me Baali," (that is my lord,) Hof. ii. 16. Or, 3dly, the vital and personal union spoken of John xv, 5. "I am the vine, ye are the branches," he that abideth in me (drawing sap and nourishment from me) "bringing forth fruit," as a living branch, "but without me ye can do nothing. And Eph. v. 30, "we are members of his body, "of his flesh, and of his bones;" and in this view it is that believers, live in him and by him, receive their all from him, and are complete in him. Or lastly, by *in him* the believer may be conceived as having *righteousness, strength,* and all the blessings and benefits he stands intitled to, reserved and laid up in him as in a magazine or storehouse, agreeable to that, "the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." John i. 14, "and of his fullness we have all received, and grace for grace," ver. 16, for "it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." Col. i. 19, that poor sinners who have nothing and are nothing in themselves might live dependant upon him, and "the life they live in the flesh might be by faith in him;" he being made of God unto them, *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*

O most precious and inestimable privilege! Brethren cease your murmurings and banish your complaints; *Jesus, the adorable Jesus though he was rich,* (transcendantly rich in all the glories of

heaven, and uncreated worth,) yet, *for your sakes*, ye who had nothing to recommend you to his mercy but your misery, who had nothing to offer for acceptance, but a sickly dying body, and a sinful and polluted soul, *he became poor*, laid aside his royal robes, and put on the rags of mortality, and *had not where to lay his head*; and for what end was this strange and unparallelled abasement? Hear it O heavens! and be astonished O earth! *It was, that ye through his poverty might be rich*; rich in grace and a lively hope of glory, rich in all the graces of his spirit, rich in all holiness and good works by that spirit, and, O comfortable thought! rich in the enjoyment of himself in glory for ever and ever. Thus it is that *one* shall say, all shall say who believe in *him*, surely, certainly, doubtless, *in the Lord*, in union with my God, joined unto my Saviour and living head, a member of his body mystical, *have I righteousness and strength*, righteousness to justify me, sanctify me, and render me acceptable to God; I have *strength* to withstand in the *evil day*, and to perform an acceptable service in the cloudy and dark day.

The text thus opened and explained, presents us with this important *proposition*. That that *righteousness* which the law requires, and which alone can give a title to glory, is only to be found as wrought out by Christ, and derived to the believer through faith in *him*. In order to make clear and settle this truth, let us first attend to the enquiry, what *righteousness the law requires*? 2d, Whether man has any abilities to fulfill those requirements?

1st, I shall not here take up your time by pursuing the enquiry, whether the law of God was

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an arbitrary or necessary imposition on the creature man ; but shall take for granted that which seems most to conduce to the glory of God, whether considered in the highly exalted capacity of a sovereign, or in the more amiable and condescending character of a Saviour. In respect to the former of these, he had an uncontrollable right to command his creatures ; yet, (humbly be it spoken,) his *soverignty* had a proper limitation from his *essence* ; therefore all his commandments and laws as the effect of *that*, had necessarily their foundation upon, and were all issued agreeable to *this*. The law of God then, as imposed on man, was to be considered as a transcript of his holy nature, and was founded on his essential and immutable perfections ; God was in himself the chiefest good, and a conformity to his holy will, as manifested in this *law*, would be the creature's highest happiness : hence the sum and substance of the law is, *thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself*. Now to suppose a law accepting and approving, any thing short of this perfect and consummate love, must be to suppose it has it's foundation on something very different from the spotless nature and essence of the *Deity* ; and as such law would necessarily derogate from the dignity and glory of God, the blessed scriptures make no mention of it. It may suffice to add, that the holy pen-men conceived of the law as most holy, inflexible, and invariable ; John says of it, " sin is a transgression of the law," therefore the law is a perfect rule, ch. 3, 4. Holy David says, " the law of God is perfect." Ps. xix. 7. James ii. 10, " whoso keepeth the whole law, yet offendeth in one point, he is guilty of all." And Paul speak-

ing thereof, says, "the law is holy, just, and good." Rom. vii. 12. And it's perfection and rigour is such, that "by it no flesh can be justified." Ch. iii. 20.

As it appears then, that the law of God requires perfect and uniform obedience, let us enquire, 2dly, Whether man is possessed of abilities to fulfill these requirements.

I shall not much detain you here with observing, what otherwise might be made easily appear, that since Adam fell, his posterity have no ground of reason to expect salvation as the reward of some obedience, or the conditions of some covenant fulfilled by them, inasmuch as no such covenant doth now subsist between God and man; Adam brake the covenant made with him, and all his seed in him; and it doth not appear in God's word, that the covenant was ever renewed but with the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are therefore now to advert, not to what Adam *was* before his fall, for *God made him upright*, but to what man now *is* in consequence of that fall, and as his depravity appears in seeking out *many inventions*, many arts and shifts and wretched subterfuges to evade the force of the violated law, and patch up something of his own, which should be called an adequate righteousness; though far enough from the form, and much further from the nature of the true and original one. When we speak of man's deficiency in power to perform the law of God, it is doubtful whether we speak with accuracy sufficient to represent the real state of things; seeing that man's inability, (if such we must call it,) is of a moral nature, and what he cannot do, is principally

cipally because he will not; therefore the promise in predicting the happy state, and increase of the Messiah's kingdom, says, "they shall be willing in the day of thy power." Ps. cx. 3. Nor is it to be conceived that the will should incline to *that*, which the whole man has such an aversion to; for sin at it's first entrance into the heart of man subverted his whole intellectual frame, and left him not only devoid of all grace and gracious desires; but drenched his soul in darkness, as touching his *understanding*, in distastefulness of all spiritual employment, in respect to his *affections*, and in the depths of stubbornness and disobedience in respect of his *will*.

When the altogether lovely and ever-amiable *Jesus* therefore is holden forth in his precious and most glorious gospel, as a Saviour every way suitable to the state and condition of a fallen sinner; there appears in him no form, comeliness or beauty, to attract the attention, or delight the eye; because, saith the apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 4, "the God of this world hath blinded their minds, sin hath veiled and drawn a cloud over the understanding," which nothing but a gracious gale of heavenly wind can dissipate and clear. All the superlative and transcendant joys that real religion can afford, are tasteless and insipid to the unrenewed mind, which neither knows nor relishes any higher joys or satisfactions than what sensual pleasures can bestow; for their minds being unexercised in the discernment of spiritual things, *they*, says the prophet, *put sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet*, that is, they prefer the falsely called pleasures of this world, and the satisfactions arising from creature comfort, to the

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incomparably more sublime and solid comfort that naturally flows from the knowledge of God, and a sincere conformity to his most holy will. And on the contrary, having no appetite or desire for the things of God, all religious exercise is unpleasant and wearisome; they are alive and active in the works and ways of sin, but lifeless and sluggish in the ways of God. There is an innate haughtiness in the minds of the unregenerate, that naturally leads them to a contempt of the gracious method of salvation, and in respect of the Lord Jesus, every unconverted sinner signifies his unwillingness to *have this man to reign over him*. Our blessed Lord may lay aside his glory, bow his heavens and come down as a stranger to sojourn in a strange land, manifest his divinity, publish his gospel and perform miracles, yet have cause to complain after all, *ye will not come to me that ye might have life*.

Such ruin and destruction has sin brought into the soul, such an evil disease has infected man, that plague, earthquake, famine, sword, and death in all it's dreadful forms; not even the thunders from Sinai, nor all the flames of forked fire belching from the bottomless pit, can rouse him to real concern for holiness and heaven, if God's almighty spirit do not apply them for that end. *Except a man be born again, saith our Lord, he cannot see the kingdom of God*. The seed of the word must fall in an honest and understanding heart, or it bears no fruit to perfection; the will must be sweetly inclined by the secret but powerful workings of the blessed spirit, or there will be no coming to Jesus; and his beauty must be disclosed to the interior eye, the eye of the soul,

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on the affections will not be fixed on the Lamb of God.

These are some of the outlines of the picture of man in his lapsed state, deformed as it is; which should it be exhibited in proper shades and colours would be much more hideous still: and if there can be any persons in love with their own purity and performances, one may venture to affirm they are such as are spoken of by the apostle James, ch. i, 23, 24, "who beholding their natural face in a glass, go away, and straightway forget what manner of men they were." God's pure and perfect law, is this glass in which the deformity of the sinner, and the defilement of all his performances by sin, appear; nor could there be any shadow of reason for men to talk of, or confide in, the one or the other, if this was carefully attended to.

Now we may easily conceive from the truth of this description, what is to be expected from a creature thus depraved and lapsed in all its noblest powers; what holy obedience can be looked for, where the heart is corrupt, deceitful and desperately wicked? What works of righteousness can proceed from a mind wholly averse to those works, nor can possibly in that state, be *subject* to the laws that enjoins them? One says, *thou requirest truth in the inward parts*, yes, says another, *but we are not able to order our conversation aright*, Why? because *in us, that is in our flesh, there dwells no good thing*. Suppose the scripture had proposed a law relaxed and brought down to our fallen state and condition; if that law had been holy, (and God could not possibly put forth any other) I apprehend it would not have bettered
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our case at all ; for it is not the measure or quantity of holiness contained in the law, that the carnal mind maligns and opposes ; but the quality thereof, *holiness*, which being wholly the reverse of such mind, “ it is not subject to that law, “ neither indeed can be. Rom. viii. 7. But we have here supposed what can never be granted by any means ; what shall the just, the righteous, the holy and sin-hating God issue a law which neither discovers the odiousness of sin, nor the immaculate purity the legislator is essentially possessed of ! Heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, men and devils shall all be eternally damned, rather than any thing so dishonourable to our God, or repugnant to his holiness shall take place. *I think not*, saith Christ, (probably to some of those who wanted a more gentle law) that I am come to *destroy the law*, I am not come to *destroy*, but to *fulfill*, and untill this be done, *not one jot, or one tittle shall be abolished*. Math. v. 17, 18.

It appears from the enquiry thus far pursued, that the righteousness which the law requires, and which alone can give a title to glory, is not to be found in man ; seeing the law is perfect, and cannot dispense with imperfect obedience, not even though it could be supposed to be sincere, which in the state just described, can never be produced ; sincerity being as much a fruit of the spirit budding in the regenerate soil, and the effect of a work of grace upon the heart, as holy hungering or thirsting after God. These things considered, we are now led more directly to shew, that a righteousness all perfect, and all complete every way adequate and commensurate to the law, was wrought out,

and

and finished by Christ, and is imputed to the believer.

By the righteousness finished by Christ, it may not be amiss to observe in this place, that I include all that he suffered, and all that he performed; his active and passive obedience not disjoined, but connected, constitute that righteousness I am preaching to you. For the substance of the law was, *do and live, disobey and die*; man disobeyed, and therefore became obnoxious to the penalty, and fell directly under the curse. Now let the offender suffer the infliction of the penalty, *death*, or let another able and willing (as a proper substitute) die in his room and place; yet it is evident the offender is far enough from any rightful claim to life, which was to have been the result and reward of obedience; but no obedience has been paid, therefore his dying for the offence (may the expression be allowed,) is but half way to life.

From hence it appears that the assertion of a great writer had in it more plausibility than accuracy, when he affirmed, "the law required only the alternative, do and live, or disobey and die." Since therefore, to restore fallen man, and give him a title to glory, it was necessary to suffer the punishment due to disobedience, and to perform what the law had enjoined, and to which, the promise of life was given. Our blessed redeemer undertook the completion of this arduous task, and died to deliver man from death, and lived to secure to him a rightful claim to heaven. Hence as one evangelically sings,

Jesus

Jesus thou art my righteousness,
 For all my sins were thine;
 Thy *death*, hath bought of God my peace,
 Thy *life*, hath made him mine.

Now as the law had a twofold claim upon man e'er it could give him a right to life, let us enquire whether our blessed Lord has answered this twofold claim fully and satisfactorily. Respecting the sufferings of our Saviour we are to attend to the following things, 1. That he suffered even unto death. 2d. That his sufferings were the effects of sin, and what the violated law required. 3d. That he suffered not for his own sins, but for the sins of others.

1st. I shall not tarry here to observe any thing concerning the dignity of our Saviour's person, save, that when he *who thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, undertook for poor sinners, he assumed a nature capable of suffering, and that nature too which had offended. As the sufferings of our Lord, were the most exquisite, so were they also the most extensive and lasting; for no sooner is the man-child born, but the *great red dragon stands ready to devour him*; he was almost no sooner born than he must be banished, *arise and flee into Egypt, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him*. So great was the antipathy conceived against the holy child, and so early did the enmity of the carnal mind begin to manifest itself against him; hence says the evangelist, *he came to his own, and his own received him not*. This cold reception he met with at his first entrance into the world, and the evil treatment from the cruel and blood-thirsty Herod, were but a specimen

cimen of what he was to undergo, and a short prelude to those sufferings that should terminate in a shameful and painful death upon the cross.

To speak particularly of the sufferings of our Lord would fill large volumes, "for he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," his whole life was one continued scene of sorrow, nor did his sorrows cease untill he emptied all his sacred veins, and poured out his soul a sacrifice on the accursed wood. How awful is the representation of this great catastrophe! The heavens are hung with mourning, while Jesus is hung upon the tree; the sun refused to see the shocking sight! rocks of flint are rent, the graves of saints are opened, and the sleeping dust arises at the cry, the awful and expiring cry of Jesus, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The vengeful sword *awoke* in wrathful indignation against the *man*, that was a *fellow* to the *Lord of Hosts*, and bathed itself in the heart's blood of the *son of God*.

2d. All his sufferings were the effects of sin, and what the law of God required. Sin and suffering are so connected together, that the antient Jews were wont to signify both by the same word; for as sin separates from God and cuts off the streams of communication between God and the soul, it must follow that sin is accompanied with that present pain and disquietude, that the light of God's countenance, and his comfortable presence never fails to scatter and dissipate when enjoyed. It is probable, had there been no sin, there would have been no suffering, since all our sufferings have respect to our bodies, or our minds; but the former suffer as they are mortal; all our aches, and pains,

pains, and sicknesses, growing from the seeds of mortality sown in our natures, and are no other than the harbingers, or advanced guards of approaching death; so speak the oracles of God, Rom. v. 12. *Sin entered into the world, and death by sin.* And the latter are oppressed with griefs and cares, partly arising from an union with the corruptible body, and partly by reason of the ignorance, doubts and fears arising from, and being the consequence of, the separation between God and the soul occasioned by sin. Such suffering as must issue in death, was what the almighty threatened in case of disobedience; such was the sanction of the law, and such was the penalty due to disobedience; therefore the law which manifests no mixture of mercy to the sinner, nor encourages the offender to disobey with any hopes of impunity, makes no abatement when it exacts, nor deducts from the number of stripes when it inflicts. If God's own son therefore, his only begotten son, his well beloved and co-equal son, is found in fashion as a man, and charged as a sinner, God's own law shews him no favour or respect; if he seems to faint at the approaching hour and prays that the *cup* may pass from him, it cannot be granted; he must drink the very dregs of the divine indignation against sin; he must bleed at every pore of his sacred body, and feel the vengeful dagger pierce his very soul, and be offered up as a whole burnt offering upon the wood of his cross.

3dly. When we see the suffering Saviour bathed in blood, and wading through a sea of sorrow, we may well be led to ask with some in his time, was he a sinner greater than all because these things
fell

fell upon him? But how strange is the answer! No, *in him there was no sin, for, he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* The holy Jesus was pure and undefiled in his nature, being that *holy thing* that was born of Mary, nor was there blame or blemish in his pious, holy, and self-denied life; yet he suffered; but says Peter, "It was the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." 1 Pet. iii. 18. "We esteemed him stricken and smitten of God and afflicted; but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquity, we like sheep had gone astray, and the Lord did lay upon him the iniquity of us all." Is. liii. 5. 6. This was one great end of our Lord's coming into the world; he came *to save his people from their sins*, but this could not be accomplished, but by carrying their sorrows; man had sinned and man must suffer; Jesus therefore the God, became man, that for the sinner, he might suffer, and become his Saviour; hence saith blessed Paul, 2 Cor. v. 21. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;" and, "We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin." Eph. i. 7. Thus we have seen our Saviour suffer, and by that suffering stilling all the threats and menaces of the injured and violated law, so that in respect of the purchase of his blood, that scripture is fulfilled, Job xxxiii. 24. "Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom:" Let us next attend to the obedience of his life, in which we shall find the utmost requirements of the righteous law so compleatly and perfectly answered, that even according to the justice and
righte-

righteousness thereof, it shall be added, *he shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteousness,* ver. 26.

The obedience the law of God required, and to which the promise of life was made, may agreeable to our Lord's own explication thereof, be reduced to these two principal heads, *the love of God, and the love of our neighbour.* In respect to the *love of God*, our Saviour's conduct in his *words and actions*, and the divine *pleasure* signified concerning these, shall be the touch-stone of the perfection of his obedience.

Pf. xl. contains a precious prediction of the Mediator, and sets forth his great willingness in undertaking man's redemption, agreeable to the first gospel promise; *in the volume of the book it is written of me*, that I should in the fullness of time be sent forth, made of a woman, to bruise the serpent's head, by dying for sin, and by an obedient life, in exact conformity to thy holy law should bring in an everlasting righteousness for all the chosen race; *and lo, I come*, with willing and obedient mind I come, to execute thy everlasting purposes, O Father, and restore the lost. Behold me ready to do, whatever thy most righteous law requires, for *I delight to do thy will O my God, yea thy law, which manifests it, is written in my heart.*

These words and declarations indicate the strongest affection to God and his ways, and agreeable to this profession, the blessed spirit represents him as entering upon the stage of the world, and the work of his ministry, saying, "Behold my servant, he shall deal prudently, and shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, he shall not
" fail

“ fail nor be discouraged, till he hath set
 “ judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait
 “ for his law. Is. lii. 13. and xlii. 1. 4. Our blef-
 sed Lord began very early to manifest his love to
 God, when twelve years old, and he had tarried
 behind his parents at Jerusalem, *wist ye not* (said
 he) *that I must be about my father's business?* This
 was his great work, this he accounted his meat
 and his drink; his disciples little understood what
 he had upon his hands, or what was nearest to his
 heart, when they reasoned among themselves, say-
 ing, *hath any man brought him ought to eat?* To
 which the dear Jesus said, *my meat is to do the*
will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.
 When the jews in the temple carped at our Lord's
 doctrine, and contradicted his words, he justified
 himself, from their calumny and slander by in-
 sisting upon the truth of his mission, the soundness
 of his doctrine, and the unreproueableness of his
 conduct; and whatever they might think of him,
 yet says he, *I do always those things that please him.*
 John viii. 29. hence our Lord says in David, “ I
 “ have preached righteousness in the great con-
 “ gregation, I have not refrained my lips O Lord,
 “ and that thou knowest. Ps. xl. 9: And his
 obedience was so highly acceptable to the father,
 that with an audible voice from heaven it is pro-
 claimed in the hearing of the people, *this is my*
beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. So well
 pleasing and acceptable was the obedience of our
 Lord, that in the active, as well as the passive part
 thereof, it appears to have been a well finished
 work; and *he hath left us an example that we should*
follow his steps, and hath taught us both by words

and works, *that without holiness no man shall see the Lord.*

In respect to the duty of the second table, none who believes in the dignity of his person, and the perfection of that obedience he paid to God, can doubt of any deficiency in this. He who said, "as ye would that men should do to you, so do ye also to them," prescribed not a rule to others which he did not exactly observe and walk by himself, and therefore could boldly appeal to his enemies, *which of you convinceth me of sin.* John viii. 46. In a word, such was the perfection of our Lord's obedience, such was the compleatness of the righteousness he wrought out by his holy life, and sin-atoning death, that the top-stone of the glorious edifice was erected with a shout, **IT IS FINISHED.** Now was fulfilled the glorious work spoken of by Daniel, chap. ix. 24. reconciliation for *iniquity*, was now made by the blood of Jesus, *transgression* was finished by the sacrifice of the bleeding lamb of God, and the *sins* of believers should no more abound to their condemnation, since Jesus had now paid the price of his blood to redeem them. **IT IS FINISHED,** an *everlasting righteousness is brought in*, a righteousness spotless, compleat, and every way perfect, even the righteousness of a redeeming God.

It having been demonstrated that Jesus our Lord in his life and death, did, and suffered, all that was necessary to deliver the offender from punishment, and give him a rightful title to life; it only remains to shew, that this righteousness is imputed, reckoned or placed to the account of every believer.

And this will manifestly appear, by adverting to

to what has already been advanced, namely, that Jesus suffered and obeyed, not for himself, or on his own account, but for others. Had he not engaged as a surety, there could not possibly have been any obligations upon him, to do, or suffer, seeing that previous to such engagement, he was perfectly holy and compleatly happy, being *God over all blessed for ever*. This is that precious doctrine both the prophets and apostles had an eye unto, and so much rejoiced in. This doctrine was held forth in every bleeding victim, which indicated a typical transfer of guilt from the offerer to the offered; and these had always respect unto the Lord Jesus, in whom these things are realized, and what before existed but in shadow, now is exhibited in the glorious substance.

The prophet Jeremiah foretelling the glories of his kingdom, and the happiness of his time, saith, "in his days, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is the name wherewith he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness. Jer. xxiii. 6. *Our righteousness*, how? not by hereditary right, not of debt, that we could make a demand of it, but *ours* by the free grace of God, bestowed, not on the rich and righteous, but on the *poor in spirit*, the unrighteous and sinners, that they may thereby be made righteous, and accepted as such. Daniel the prophet says, he shall bring in an everlasting *righteousness*, for whom? For what end? For the poor sinner that wants a covering, that imputed to him, it may be his acceptable wedding garment. Our blessed Lord wanted no robe to adorn him, he was cloathed with light and majesty from eternity; and the righteousness he wrought out on earth was in-

tended for the purchase of his blood; his church, his spouse; that she might be presented to the king in raiment of needle-work, and have a cloathing of wrought gold. The righteousness Jesus performed he imparts, *he renders unto man his righteousness*, that he, like Joseph when he stood before Pharaoh, may come with joy and boldness into the presence of the Lord. This *righteousness*, wrought out by Christ, and which is made unto us of God, is by imputation; Paul prayed to obtain *this* by imputation; David's blessed man who has *righteousness* without works, has *it* by imputation; nor does the scripture know or teach any other way to salvation but by righteousness, and this can only be obtained by imputation. Permit me just to add, and I dismiss the point, that as Jesus Christ was not, could not, be a sinner but by the imputation of sin; none of Adam's posterity could be guilty through his offence, but by imputation; so none of the seed of the second Adam can be righteous, but by the imputation of his righteousness; hence saith the apostle, "he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. v. 21.

Precious truth! here is a pardon for the guilty, the condemned malefactor; here is a cordial, a heart-reviving elixir for the sin-sick fainting soul; a balm for the wounded, a release for the prisoner, a discharge for the debtor, and cloathing for the naked.

Are there any amongst you that hear me this day, that live regardless of any *righteousness* at all? I take it for granted then ye live regardless of heaven also, for the latter can neither be obtained,

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tained, nor enjoyed without the former; for *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*. What dæmon, what devil hath bewitched you, and blinded your minds! What, subjects to the king of kings, and live without regard to his laws! Rational creatures, and live as exempt from all obligations of duty to your creator! God will surely visit for these things and cause the stubborn rebel, and obstinate offender who scorned to kiss the golden scepter of his love, to bow down beneath the iron rod of his vindictive justice.

When Adam first sinned and fell from God, he saw his nakedness, and sought to patch up a covering; but it seems the God of this world hath so blinded your minds and hardened your hearts by sinning, that you are unconscious of your naked condition, and can glory in your shame. O ye dry-bones hear the word of the Lord; “because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they shall seek me, but they shall not find me; because they hated knowledge and did not chuse the fear of the Lord.” Prov. i. 24—30. “Beware therefore, lest this come upon you which is written.” Acts xiii 40.

But 2dly, Are there some who see the need of some *righteousness* to recommend you to the divine acceptance? And are ye diligently (but vainly and unprofitably) employed, in procuring a robe of recommendation, a righteousness perfect

and compleat as the law that requires it? Permit me to caution you, take heed that your garment be without spot or wrinkle; one spot will spoil the whole, and leave you under the curse. Take heed it be not too short, you will be obnoxious to the malediction of the law, not only for doing what it forbids, but also for not doing and that in the most perfect manner, all that it commands. Take heed that your garment be lasting and durable, you cannot stand in the presence of the righteous God with a ragged thread-bare coat; nothing less can be dispensed with by the pure and perfect law, than a flaming heart, a heart burning with love and unquenchable desire to God and his works. Are you able to produce a righteousness so perfect, so compleat every way? No, see your parents in the garden, attempting to hide their shame and nakedness in vain; be warned by their folly, and lend your ear for instruction to the Lord. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me." Is. lv. 2. "I have laid help upon one that is mighty, I have exalted one chosen out of the people; in his name shall they rejoice all the day, and in his righteousness shall they be exalted." Ps. lxxxix. 16, 19.

But 3dly, Do some of you see the necessity of a righteousness, most perfect and compleat, and are you convinced that you have no such righteousness, nor hopes of ever producing such. Happy for you poor naked souls, the Lord God will cloath you, not with the *skin* of a slain beast, but with the precious righteousness, the costly robe prepared

pared by our gracious Saviour, on purpose to be a covering for poor naked sinners; and of which, the *skins* that were worn by our common parents, were but a type. This *righteousness*, will at once cloath and cover you, sheltering you from all the blasts and storms of divine indignation, and richly adorn you, rendering you fit to stand before the king. This *righteousness* is a compleat covering, not like Aaron's vestment, (which might be a faint shadow of this) reaching only down to the knee; but like the long white garment John saw Jesus wear, Rev. i. 13, reaching down to the feet. This *righteousness*, is the acceptable wedding garment, found in *this*, you are a welcome guest. Bear with me whilst I add, this *righteousness*, is free, for every naked sinner; ten thousand worlds cannot purchase *it*; but true indigence of spirit obtains *it*. This with all the gifts of God are free; free grace, free mercy, free righteousness, a free Christ, and a free heaven; come then ye poor and purchase, buy without money and without price.

Lastly, ye, who in the language of my text have said, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*, what is to be expected from you, how do you find your hearts disposed towards God? Does this persuasion make you careless and negligent? Does this precious doctrine lead you to dissolute lives and licentious practices? Totally the reverse; they who imagine this, seem utter strangers to the holy, quickening, sin-hating, God-loving nature of sovereign, divine, and efficacious grace. Ye labour not in mortifying your lusts, and self-denied obedience, to deserve the good land, which is freely given you of grace; but

but to subdue the rebel Canaanites that yet remain, that ye may live to God alone, and *serve him in righteousness and true holiness, all the days of your life.* Ye have no reason to conclude, that because Jesus obeyed the law for you, as a covenant, and thereby gives you a title to eternal life; that you are not under the law as creatures, and the highest and strongest obligations to devote your all to your creator; yea, this superlative instance of the divine goodness added to all his former favours to you, must be so far from diminishing your obligations to gratitude and love, that they are infinitely heightened thereby.

To conclude, since the adorable Jesus, has done so much for you, think no labours too hard, no toil too great, to undergo with chearfulness, for his sake; press forward thro' every difficulty, faint under no discouragements, shrink beneath no crosses, nor start from any trial; let the heart-reviving hope, of which you partake, animate your minds and bear up your spirits in the glorious work. Is your way through the world painful and perplexing? Thanks be to God it is not long; and if your crosses be heavy, the crown, the never-fading crown that awaits you, shall be bright.

S E R

WILHELMUS [169] R. 169
SERMON VII.

ROMANS v. 10.

If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life.

IT has been debated whether there ever was, or can be such thing in the world as a real atheist in principle; that too many are such in practice, cannot be denied or doubted: The great teacher of the gentile *Ephesians*, says of them, ye were without Christ, and "atheists in the world." Eph. ii. 12, and reminding the *Galatians* of the state from which they had in much mercy been called, saith, "howbeit then when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no Gods." Gal. iv. 8, therefore God even in these, did not leave himself without witness in their consciences, of his existence. The same writer observes, "that the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power" er

“er and godhead; Rom. i. 20. The power and wisdom of the adorable creator shine forth with a striking magnificence in all the visible creation, and carry conviction as far and wide as the utmost bounds thereof extend. We are immediately swallowed up in mystery, and lost in a labyrinth of wonder and surprize, when we begin to contemplate the power of that arm that launched this huge terraqueous globe with it's inconceivable cargo of rocks and desarts, seas and mountains, in liquid air, to float as a ship on the ocean of waters. How striking is that interrogation, and how strong the idea it presents us with! “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand?” Who but this almighty Lord? “and meted out the heavens with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a ballance?” Is. xl. 12. This is peculiar to him, of whom it is beautifully said, “he spake, and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast. Ps. xxxiii. 9.

Nor does his wisdom less discover itself in every part of the vast and wide creation; “for day unto day uttereth speech; and night unto night sheweth his unsearchable knowledge. He knoweth the springs of the sea, and is acquainted with all the subterraneous passages of the deep waters; hell itself is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering. He knows how to bind the sweet influences of the pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion. He knoweth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names.”

But what shall be said to the discovery of his grace,

grace, and the manifestation of his love to sinners? Manifested, what created mind can conceive the transcendent greatness thereof, in the inestimable gift of his only-begotten Son! For this mystery of mysteries, for the discovery of this everlasting love which was eternally hid in the bosom of the Deity, we are entirely beholden to revelation. Nature, although voluminous in the display of the wisdom and power of God, and his goodness in general as exhibited in all her works; yet is unable to make any particular discoveries of his love and mercy, and although every herb of the field hath a voice, and every star in the firmament a tongue to declare and publish the former; yet the *cross* alone on which our *Jesus* died, fully and satisfactorily makes known the latter.

That sinners who had rebelled against their king and God, forfeited all claim to his favour, and merited the hottest hell, should be redeemed, and that with blood divine, is a mystery that angels in vain desire to look into. The beloved disciple when meditating on this mysterious mercy manifested to poor sinners, cries out in an extatic strain, "what manner of love is this, the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God." 1 John ii. 1, and a little after in the same letter, "in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." Ch. iv. 9. This is the important truth holden forth to the world in the word of the gospel; "he that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself," of that transcendent love of God in giving

giving his Son to be a *propitiation* for his sins ; the belief of *this*, is big with consolation, big with life-eternal. The sinner that believes, " tho' his sins were as scarlet, they shall be as wool," the sinner that " believes is justified freely " from all things from which he could not be " justified by the law of Moses. Acts xiii. 39.

This is the glorious truth, our apostle so copiously and convincingly handles in this part of his large letter to the *Romans*, from whence I have read my text ; and the gracious fruits and effects of justification by faith are set before us, and treated of in a manner, best adapted to cheer and animate the christian, and worthy of so great a proficient in the school of Christ, as was the apostle Paul.

The important doctrine of justification being clearly proved, the chapter is introduced with these words, *therefore being justified by faith*, the comfortable and necessary effects follow, *we have peace with God*, a blessing not to be bought with money ; *access*, into the presence chamber of the prince of peace ; *rejoicing in hope of the glory of God*, with a joy that a stranger intermeddleth not with ; *we glory in tribulation*, for all things work together for good ; *and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us*. I shall not detain you in enlarging upon, and describing the worth, and excellency of these effects or fruits of justification, which fully to treat of, would require large volumes, and after all be but like a painted flame ; seeing spiritual joys are best described by the engravings of the blessed spirit upon the heart, in sensible delight, and soul-felt satisfaction.

I pass

I pass on therefore to observe the declarations of God's love, in ver. 6, 8, 10, from which the apostle by a just and reasonable way of arguing, from the greater to the less, deduces the comfortable and soul-animating doctrine of the saint's final perseverance. His argument stands thus—He that loves another, when at enmity, and labours to reconcile him, will much more love him when reconciled—

But God loved us when we were yet sinners, and gave his son to die to reconcile us.

Therefore being reconciled, much more will he now love us to the end.

Or thus,

If God redeemed us from hell by the blood of his Son, he will not withhold the grace of his spirit which was also purchased by that blood.

But God hath redeemed us unto himself by the blood of Jesus Christ his Son,

Therefore he will not withhold that grace purchased by that blood, and which will bring us to glory.

In the text we have a state of enmity which is our natural condition, opposed to reconciliation effected by the death of Christ; 2dly, Reconciliation, or a state of amity from whence to infer the certainty of salvation secured unto us by his life.

Our state of enmity or natural unconverted state, is described in a threefold manner, ver. 6, we are said to have been *without strength*, ver. 8, that we *were sinners*, and ver. 10, *we were enemies*; a small degree of attention to this description, will present us with an awful pourtrait of man without Christ, and his renovating grace.

When

and have a rightful claim to glory for the sake of Christ's merits. Were we sinners? *Christ died for us*, not for us as saints, holy persons, for such we were not; but for *sinners*, that they might be saints. Were we enemies? We are reconciled by the *death of his Son*. All our blessings therefore are the price of blood, all spiritual comforts are conveyed to us through the vehicle of blood. Well may the Redeemer say in words like those, *Exod. v. 25*, "surely a bloody spouse art thou to me."

Let the poor trembling sinner, who in his own apprehension is on the verge of the bottomless pit, and who like the publican in the temple stands afar off, and scarce dare lift his eyes towards heaven; I say, let such poor disconsolate creatures, learn some useful lessons of instruction from the observations already made on this precious scripture.

1st, God's love to sinners is free and undeserved; and the whole world when arraigned at God's bar is brought in guilty, not one excepted, for, *all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, and there is none righteous, no not one.* *Rom. iii. 10—23.* Now if there be salvation for any, why not for you as soon as any other? *For there is no difference.* The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is as freely preached to you, as ever it was to those who hearing and believing it, are now in glory; and it is proposed to you on the same terms, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and ye shall be saved.* The saints in glory, of whom the sacred pen-man of this precious passage is not the least, (in heaven, although such he accounted himself to be on earth) were once numbered amongst those ungodly,

ly, ver. 6, for whom the Saviour died ; and says the divine writer, *while we were yet sinners.* Jesus Christ did not postpone his purposed death untill these had left their sins and become righteous ; but he shed his precious blood, to obtain that grace, whereby their hearts should be renewed, and they be made righteous. You complain that you are yet weak, that your lives have been wicked, and your hearts to this moment are hard and unbelieving. All this you see is no bar to the love of God in Christ Jesus ; if God had not loved sinners while yet they were such, and in rich mercy undertaken to recover them from that state by a way worthy of himself, they must have remained sinners to all eternity, and suffered the punishment due to sin. There is not in this or any age of the world a trembling sinner whom the Lord does not look to in love, nor one that is bowed down and contrite in heart, with whom Jehovah himself does not dwell.

2dly. Christ's agonizing and painful death has fully accomplished the purposes of heavenly love. *He*, the Redeemer of his people came not on a fool's errand, nor spilt his precious blood in vain. The price was great, glorious, wonderful. *The precious blood of the Son of God, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.* What could it not effect ? It was the price of pardon, we had sinned, the Saviour suffered ; he died the death we sinners had deserved. Pardon therefore is purchased, the price, the inconceivably great and immense price is paid. Settle the comfortable truth therefore in your hearts ; there needs no second payment, for there's no after claim. The law wants nothing more, stern justice is appeased, and the

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glorious work in every part is *finished*. Nor suffer it to slip out of your minds, that Jesus died for sinners, the price is paid for the poor, *the poor in spirit, and their's*, as the purchased blessing, *is the kingdom of heaven*. Rejoice and be glad in your reconciled God, for *he was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*. Herod and Pontius Pilate who before were at enmity, were reconciled to each other in condemning Jesus; but God, and sinners who were before at enmity are reconciled in the execution of that sentence, thro' the shedding of his most valuable blood, for *when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*. Therefore do ye daily meditate on the blood and death of the dear Son of God, and draw your cure, a perfect cure, a cure for all the maladies of your sin-sick souls from the Redeemer's cross. He bled the precious balm poor wounded sinners want, nor is his blood grown old, nor has it lost it's power, *He is a Saviour to to the uttermost for all that come to God by him, and whosoever comes*, sinners hear and lay up in your hearts the precious saying, *I will in no wise cast out*.

3dly. You are hereby also taught that salvation is not but by the blood of Christ, for there is no justification but in consequence of his vicarious death; therefore they who strive and toil thinking by their own self-laboured works to enter into heaven, do but *spend their strength for nought, and their labour for that which satisfieth not*. Such are thieves and robbers, they refuse to come in by the door Christ Jesus, and attempt to climb up and enter another way; these *rob God* of the glory due to his name as the *only Saviour*. If.

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xliv. 21. They rob Christ of his glory, in pretending to join to his perfect and compleatly finished work, their own poor and paltry performances; or by totally neglecting the *great salvation*, he has wrought out by his *arm alone*.

The Lord will be magnified in the salvation of his people, and had in reverence of all the saints; the base and obnoxious idol of self-righteousness must not stand in the temple of the living God; Dagon shall fall and Merodach shall be broken in pieces, and the Lord alone shall be exalted. *I am God and there is none else, and I will not give my glory to another*, the glory of my justice, which would be stained if I suffered sin to pass unpunished; the glory of my holiness, which would be greatly obscured if I did not require a perfect righteousness for salvation; and the glory of my mercy, which would be totally eclipsed if salvation were a debt that was owing for some creature obedience.

4thly. You are to note herefrom, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the obnoxious state of the sinner in consequence thereof. How exceedingly offensive must sin be conceived to be, in the eyes of the immaculate *Jehovah*, seeing that his only-begotten son, when considered as the sinner's substitute, is constrained to drink the bitter cup of unmixed vengeance; nor was there abatement made him in the price, of one drop of his precious blood. Not all the manifestations of the divine displeasure against sin, in the most alarming and distressing judgments, so loudly declare the resentment of heaven, or paint the hideous monster in such terrifying colours, as the blood of the holy Jesus, spilt and poured out like water to expiate sin, and manifest to the sinner that there

was no other way for his reconciliation. Floods of water that shall deluge the earth and drown it's ungodly inhabitants; flames of fire and brimstone that shall devour and depopulate whole countries; do not so much manifest God's hatred of sin, as the sufferings of his only-begotten and well-beloved Son. He was *stricken, smitten* of God and *afflicted*; he was *wounded, bruised, chastised, oppressed, and cut off* out of the land of the living; he had done no violence, yet the Lord *bruised him, and put him to grief*. The most exquisite sufferings of our blessed Lord, are described and thus set forth in a variety of expressions, adapted by infinite wisdom to the greatness and various sensations of sorrow, the illustrious sufferer felt; by the evangelical prophet, ch. liii. who remarks upon the whole, that transgression and iniquity, even *our transgressions, our iniquities*, were the cause.

Settle it then in your hearts as a truth momentous and undoubted, that sin when it seems most pleasing, is then most poisonous; and when solicited to compliance therewith, turn your eyes to yonder cross; there see what sin has done, and be assured it is still the same. And while you view the bleeding Lamb stretched on the wood of his cross; ask your heart, Whence is all this? What has he done? Wretch that I am, what have I done? Have not my sins fastened him to the cross? Has not my unbelief pierced that tender bleeding heart, that now trembles in the pangs of death, and while bathed in it's own gore, yet flames with love? O grace unparalleled, matchless mercy! can it be that it should flame with love to me, a sinner, and his murderer? Yes, adored be sovereign grace, adored be matchless
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and superlative goodness, the sinners surety bleeds, the sinners Saviour prays, *father forgive*, nor did he bleed, or pray in vain. And if *when we were yet without strength, and ungodly*, Christ died for us, much more will he *save* us by living in us; if *while we were yet sinners*, he engaged by death to *save* us, how much more being *saved* he will live to intercede for us. In a word, *if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life*; which leads us to the second principal part of the text, and which presents us with a state of *amity*, from whence to infer the certainty of salvation secured unto us by his life.

Salvation respects, first, a deliverance from that death, our sins had deserved, and to expiate which, the Redeemer shed his blood; *this* Elihu had an eye unto in that beautiful passage, Job xxxiii, 24, “deliver him from going down in-”
 “to the pit, I have found a ransom; *deliver* him; (*Pedabbebu,*) *redeem him*, pay the price for him, not of corruptibles, *gold* or *silver*, but *precious blood*, the blood of Christ, pure and spotless as a lamb without blemish. I have found a *ransom*, (*Copber,*) a *covering*, Christ Jesus the messenger, the interpreter, the one of a thousand, the true mercy-seat; in him I am pleased, in him my soul acquiesces.

This, our apostle also looks unto, ver. 9, “much more then being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” Sin being pardoned through the blood of atonement, can no more condemn, and the sinner being justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, has nothing to fear from the rigour of the law,

or the justice of God ; since the former can produce no indictment against him, and the latter has accorded to his free and full justification. *The wrath of God, says the scripture, is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,* but Jesus Christ is appointed and *set forth to be a propitiation for sin,* that the sinner might be reconciled *through faith in his blood,* and obtain the remission of sins ; and hereby be delivered from the curse, and freed from condemnation. Sinners because of their transgressions have deserved to die eternally, and to wail on beds of inextinguishable fire for ever ; and nothing but the blood-shedding of the Son of God could prevent it ; for without shedding of blood (says the law which was but a shadow) there is no remission, not even in the shadow ; much less in the realizing, substantiating dispensation of the gospel. But since Christ the Lord has died, he has made a full and perfect satisfaction for the sins of all that shall believe in him ; and notwithstanding a sinner may cry out in respect of his corrupt nature yet remaining, and the frequent ebullitions of corruption, “ O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? Yet the believer will always have a heart-reviving answer in readiness, *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, I shall be delivered from the body of death I feel, and from the death I might justly fear, had he not died to redeem me.*

2dly, Salvation respects that state of blessedness, which Jesus the forerunner is gone to prepare for his people ; and concerning which he hath said, *I will come again and receive you to myself, that where*

where I am, there ye may be also. This is that salvation, the sinner made holy, enjoys in the light of God's countenance; by which his heart is made glad more than with wine; and in the beatific sight of the most amiable of all objects, whose footsteps shine with such refulgent brightness in the things that are seen, the workmanship of his hands. The royal psalmist seems to have had a lively conception of this heavenly blessedness, and a thorough knowledge wherein it did consist, when he says, Ps. lxxiii, 25, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? What are all the glories that heaven itself can boast in comparison of my God, a *kingdom* without Christ, can yield no happiness, not even a kingdom in heaven; *thrones and crowns*, &c. compared with him, are not worth a wish, not even to be enjoyed through everlasting ages and in heaven too. But, says he, Ps. xvi, 11, "in thy presence there is fullness of joy. What can I want when I have thee? Happy soul that can say the Lord is my portion, even while on earth these shall have no lack, and in heaven there is (*Sebab*,) expressive word, *fullness* of joy, *at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.* So near to thee my God, I must be happy, thy munificent hand dispenses blessings in abundance, and from the smilings of thy face eternal day and infinite delights issue; for these *pleasures*, will be such *for evermore.* Not like the transient blaze of feeble pleasures arising from created good, which disappoint our most sanguine expectations, and vanish tasteless in the highest enjoyment of them.

Precious salvation! How marvellous the love that first moved it! How unsearchable the *wisdom*

dom that planned it ! How sovereign, strange, and free the *grace* that effects it ! 'Tis wonder all ! Lord what is man ? It had been a mercy to have saved the sinful, obnoxious creature from hell ; but how inconceivably high does that mercy rise, that exalts him to heaven ; restores him to the divine image and favour ; and confers a crown of everlasting felicity ! This complete and consummate salvation, comprehends in it, all that was necessarily previous thereto ; and which were appointed and intended, as means for the obtaining of it. Must the sinner be convinced of sin, in order to lead him to Jesus ? This is a blessing resulting from the death and resurrection of the Son of God ; “ It is expedient for you that I go a way, for if I go not away the comforter will not come, but if I go I will send him unto you, and when he is come, he shall reprove the world of sin,” &c. Hence saith our blessed Lord, “ Every man that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me.” John vi, 45. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick ; nor will any be persuaded to come to Christ, ’till quickened by his gracious spirit, and “ made willing in the day of his power.” Grace in all its various operations on the soul, is included, and becomes a constituent part in this salvation.

All the dispensations of providence, adversity, prosperity, honour, dishonour, contempt, applause ; with all the believer’s crosses, bodily afflictions, spiritual desertions, tides of divine and religious joys ; ebbs of comfort, damps, distrusts, and darkest days of clouded experience, are comprehended in this great salvation ; and
through

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through the unsearchable wisdom, and superabundant goodness of God, conspire to carry it on and compleat it. This comfortable truth is taught, in those words, "We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose." Rom. viii, 28. This is the salvation our apostle has an eye to in the text, saying, "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be *saved* by his life." And nothing short of a salvation thus compleat in all it's parts, begun, carried on, and finished, we may justly expect and look for, in consequence of the Redeemer's life; rejoicing in this, that if by his death we are saved from hell, much more by his life we shall assuredly be brought by him, and through him to heaven.

1st, *By his life*, below, from which we derive a twofold blessing, 1st, By his patience and submission under the most provoking insults, and the heaviest sufferings, "he hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps." 2d, By the exact and uniform obedience which he paid to the law of God, he hath "brought in an everlasting righteousness." It is the latter of these blessings, we at present are to consider. The apostle tells us, "Christ was made under the law," and therefore became subject to all legal injunctions, moral and ceremonial; at eight days old, he submitted to the painful rite of circumcision, a bloody ordinance, and was to him a presage of his bloody death. When about to enter on his ministry, he applies to John for baptism, and signifies the reasons of his procedure in those words,
"suffer

“suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us
 “to fullfil all righteousness.” Jesus ever went up
 to Jerusalem, according to the custom of the Jews,
 at all the appointed feasts, and might be said,
 (perhaps more eminently than St. Paul,) as touch-
 ing the righteousness of the ceremonial law to be
 blameless. Nor did the obedience of our blessed
 Lord terminate in the observance of shadowy rites,
 and temporary institutions; but with much great-
 er propriety might those words be applied unto
 the king of saints, than the king of Israel, “I
 “will have respect unto all thy commandments.”

That scripture was justly verified in the cha-
 racter and conduct of our Jesus, “the law of God
 “is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide.”
 The blood of bullocks, goats and lambs, the
 Lord had no pleasure or delight in; but the sa-
 crifice of a willing and obedient heart, the Lord
 requires, and is well pleased with, “my son give
 “me thy heart,” this the Lord Jesus does, and
 therefore saith, “I delight to do thy will, O my
 “God, for thy law is within my heart.” Christ’s
 obedience was all perfect and compleat, adequate
 to the requirements of the perfect law, and well
 pleasing to the Lord; hence he is called by the
 prophet by way of special eminency, the Lord’s
 righteousness, Is. xlv. 13, “hearken unto me
 “ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteous-
 “ness, I bring near my righteousness.” The law
 of God receives it’s due honour in the consum-
 mate obedience of our Lord, and is hereby “mag-
 “nified and made honourable,” in the eyes of all
 that look unto it.

Our glorious redeemer was in himself far supe-
 rior to all law; being himself the eternal and most
 holy

holy Lord, whose essence is the very foundation and reason of his law, and whose uncontrollable sovereignty authorizes him to impose it upon his creatures; and being such, could possibly be under no obligations to obey. Hence it comes to pass, that when this infinitely high-exalted being, *made himself of no reputation*, Phillip. ii. 7. (*ekenose*) emptied himself of the dazzling glory, too bright for mortals to behold; and took upon him the form of a servant, that all he did, and all he suffered was meritorious; seeing the law could inflict no punishment on him that was infinitely remote from all sin; nor exact any performance by way of duty, from him, to whom all obedience was due. Therefore what he suffered was as a surety for his people, to satisfy for their sins, and what he did, was in their stead, to give them a title to glory. And thus our Saviour is by the prophet Jeremiah, chap xxx. 21, represented as engaged in the most solemn manner, going about to execute the purposes of his love. "Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me saith the Lord;" that as the messenger of the covenant, he may propound the terms of reconciliation and acceptance for his *bretbren*. This is that which a man shall swear, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*, and the whole multitude of the redeemed as they return to Sion with singing, shall make this the burden of their song, *the Lord our righteousness*.

2dly. The certainty of salvation is insured to those that are reconciled by his death, by his life above. And the bond of the believers insurance runs thus, *because I live, ye shall live also*. John xiv. 19. That his followers might have no doubts of

of the certainty of their salvation, full, and final by him, he shewed himself to them after his resurrection, at various times and in divers manners, and signified their safety in him in such words as these, *all power is given unto me, in heaven, and in earth*, Matt. xxviii. 18. of whom then should ye be afraid? Though an host of men, and legions of devils should assault you, it must be by my permission they can touch you. This comfortable confirmation of the believers faith and hope we find, Rev. i. 18. "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death." Therefore has the redeemer opened the kingdom to all believers, and none can shut the gates against them. Jesus the great high-priest of our profession, is entered in for us into the holy place, *to appear in the presence of God*, not by the blood of others, entered he into the holy of holies, but by his own most precious blood, having thereby *consecrated a new and living way*. And, *having such a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the son of God*, we are exhorted, and encouraged, to come with boldness to the throne of grace, *that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*, Heb. iv. 14. 16. And are assured of salvation by him to the uttermost, seeing says the apostle, *he ever liveth to make intercession for us*, chap. vii. 25. Thus by the obedient and meritorious life of Jesus the mediator, *below*, a rightful claim and title to everlasting felicity is secured unto the believer; and by the power and prevalency of his intercession *above*, that grace is imparted, and all those succours granted, that are necessary to bring him to the possession and enjoyment thereof.

of. Hence it is the apostle in our text, by a sweet *multo magis* infers the certainty of salvation by his life, in consequence of reconciliation by his death.

The doctrine holden forth in this precious text is; they who are reconciled to God, by the death of his son, shall obtain certain salvation by the life of their Saviour. The truth of which will appear by the following considerations.

1st. God's love to sinners is free, and unmerited; this appears sufficiently manifest in the verses preceding the text; receives confirmation from every page of the sacred book, and is a truth I have briefly treated in the beginning of this discourse. The greatness of God's love, is most fully manifested in the gift of his only begotten son, which by the apostle is called a gift unspeakable, 2 Cor. ix. 15. Heaven and earth with all their myriads and millions of created excellencies, bear no comparison to this infinitely glorious, and transcendent person, concerning whom, we have that striking description by the prophet Is. chap. xl. 12—18. In which lofty and elegant passage (not to be paralleled) we have a declaration of his grandeur and greatness, in ver. 15, *behold, the nations*, not a country or kingdom, but the habitable world, the whole compass and extent of the terraqueous globe, “are as a drop of a bucket; and are counted as the dust of the balance;” the dust which is dispersed by the smallest breeze, and scattered by the least motion of the air; yea, “He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. Lebanon is not sufficient to burn,” with all her spicy stores, *nor all the beasts* that graze on its wide extended surface, *sufficient for a burnt offering*, to this almighty Lord, this inconceivably great and
glori-

glorious God. For in his eyes, *all the nations are as nothing, yea, less than nothing and vanity.* Yet this glorious person is given as a free gift to the children of men, to be a surety for them, in order to their salvation, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16. This glorious person gives himself, "for our sin, to redeem us from this present evil world, &c. Gal. i. 4. But who can explain, or find out the source and fountain of this love? Men who have the first fruits of the spirit, are lost in contemplating it, and cry out in extasy, *what manner of love is this?* Angels who stand in his presence, and are employed as messengers to publish the glad tidings to the world; are utterly unable to discover this mystery of love, although they study it with pleasing delight, or to sound with the utmost stretch of their bright intellectuals the immeasurable depth. Now since the love of God which has been manifested to sinners, was free and sovereign; and since the God who has shewn this love is unchangeable; what an immovable basis have believers to build their hopes upon! For, "HE is in one mind, and who can turn him? His gifts and callings are without repentance. Job xxiii. 13. Rom. ii. 29.

2dly. It is impossible that the souls for whom Jesus died, should die eternally for sin; for justice itself, stands engaged to deliver them from going down to the pit, since Christ has ransomed them at the exorbitant price of his own blood. And if in justice these cannot be sent to hell, because Christ has suffered all their sins demerited; what must

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must become of them at last, if we should deny them a place in heaven? Our Saviour has told us that the separation will be to the right hand, and left, and the different characters of the separated, will be sheep and goats; but the scriptures tell of no middle place, or nature. Believers therefore, cannot, must not be ranked among the goats, because they bear the mark of Jesu's sheep; they have been bought with his blood, and HE the good shepherd has brought them back to the fold, his church, upon his shoulder. Furthermore, for whom Jesus dies, he also lived on earth, and lives in heaven; as he became a surety for his people, he did and suffered all that was needful for their salvation; nor is his active and passive obedience (however treated of separately and distinctly,) ever to be conceived of, but as one glorious aggregate, uniting their influence, and conjoining their efficacy, to work out a full salvation for the believer.

3dly. The saint's salvation is certain, inasmuch as he is a member of Jesu's mystical body; *we are*, says the apostle, *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.* Eph. v. 30, and the argument made use of for our consolation runs thus, *no man ever yet hated his own flesh.* But ye are members of the flesh of the Lord Jesus; therefore he cannot hate you, *but nourisheth and cherisheth it*, his own flesh, but ye are his own flesh. Therefore he will nourish and cherish you. He will *nourish* the dear purchase of his blood, beneath his bleeding side; this is the cleft of the rock in which the Lord will shelter them from the stormy wind and tempest, his feathers shall be their covering, and his faithfulness their shield and buckler.

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The kindness and care of the Lord to his people is set forth in declarations like these; "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." Ps. xci. 5, 6, 7. Again, "Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame; no weapon, that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn." Is. liv. 4, 17. For these, *a man shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; even the man, the king of saints who shall reign in righteousness.* Is. xxxii. 1. 2. Nor will the Lord be wanting in affection to the members of his body, but will *cherish* them. These enjoy in him, a peace that passeth all understanding; inherit the joys of faith, and the consolations of hope. *A feast of fat things* is prepared for these, *of marrow and fatness.* The Lord comforts the hearts of his people with his love, which cheers their spirits more than wine; he breaks unto them the bread of life, and the language of his heart and lips is, eat and drink my well beloved. These are the Lord's Jeshurun, his upright ones of whom it is said, he will give them grace and glory, and every good thing, Ps. lxxxiv. 11. In a word, if omnipotence can defend these they shall suffer no harm; if divine veracity may be relied on, they shall obtain and inherit every kind of good; even that felicity, which eye hath not seen, ear heard, nor

nor has entered into the heart of man to conceive; for God's infallible word, backed with his tremendous oath, are engaged for the present consolation, and final salvation of the redeemed world. Heb. vi. 17, 18.

4thly. The saints perseverance is ascertained to them in consequence of their effectual calling; *for whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* Rom. viii. 30. The saints calling is the third link in the golden chain of salvation, and on every link in this indissoluble chain is a motto, or ascription of glory to God. Saints are said to be called with an *holy calling*, nor is it in consequence of a holy conversation, but they are called hereunto; for previous to this, like others, *they fulfill the lusts of the flesh, and of the mind*; and their calling is a consequence of their election in Christ Jesus; they are called out of darkness into God's marvellous light, and the end of their calling is, to walk in good works which God has before ordained. 2 Tim. i. 9. So inseparably connected is God's purpose as secret to himself, and the discoveries of that purpose in the calling of his people; that we may safely and without presumption, infer the former, in proportion to the certainty of the latter; hence the apostle Peter exhorts, "Wherefore brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." 2 Pet. i. 10. An effect always supposes a cause; but the cause of the christian's calling cannot be resolved but into the good pleasure of God; agreeable to the scripture language, "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his own will." Eph. i. 5. Be-

fides, we are called not unto uncleanness but unto holiness, saith the scripture, and " God hath chosen us that we should be without blame before him in love," now holiness and happiness are inseparable, and it is as impossible in the nature of things, that a holy man should go to hell, as it is that a wicked and ungodly man should go to heaven. The perseverance of the saints is therefore certain as the truth of their calling; seeing he that calls them, will from the same principle of free and undeserved goodness, confirm them in holiness, and compleat them in happiness.

5thly. The certainty of Christ's resurrection, may yield another proof of the saints perseverance. By this our blessed Lord might be supposed to remove the doubts that distressed the minds of his disciples concerning him; hence the news of his resurrection was handed about with joy and satisfaction proportioned to the credit of the fact. *We trusted, say they, that this was he;* but now where's the proof? But when the tidings are brought, *the Lord is risen indeed,* he that believed the report could now cry out, *my Lord and my God;* and and that for just reasons, for Jesus died as a man, but rises as a God; and is by this act declared to be the son of God with power. Now from the relation the believer has to Jesus, it is not possible he can be deprived of his part in the blessedness Jesus enjoys; if the members could be severed from the head, what becomes of the body? And if God raises the head, in token of acceptance, it must necessarily follow that he raise the members too, which are accepted in him. Believers therefore may stay themselves upon his word and pro-

mise,

mise, in all their droopings, and desertions, that *because he lives, they shall live also.*

6thly. The indwelling of the spirit, which is a privilege common to all believers, may be considered as another argument for their perseverance. Our blessed Lord when about to leave the world, essayed to comfort his disciples by telling them, he would send them another comforter, even the spirit of truth; whose gracious care over them should be manifested, in bringing to their memory the things they had heard; making new discoveries of the love of Jesus unto them, and in leading them into the way of all truth. Now, notwithstanding the holy spirit might here be promised in an extraordinary manner, and for extraordinary purposes; yet it is equally certain, that this promise is fulfilled to believers in all ages and places, for the ordinary purposes of salvation; for *if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his; and all that are sons of God, are led by the spirit of God.* Being led by the spirit, they are led in the way acceptable to God, even the way everlasting.

I might go on to adduce Christ's session and intercession, as further proofs of the saint's perseverance, but think it needless; for *if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life.*

I would now beg your patience with me a few minutes, untill I point out unto you some uses I would have you make of what has been said, and I shall have done.

1st. Often call to mind God's free and discriminating grace to you; let that soul-humbl-
ing interrogation be often in your lips, nor

let it ever be absent from your minds, " Lord what " am I, or what is my father's house ?" You have no cause or reason to lift up yourselves in the spirit of the Pharisee, and with a haughty brow to look down on others ; you know both who, and what makes you to differ from another ; and ye have nothing excellent, that ye have not received, and therefore you have no cause to boast.

Be resigned to all the providences of God, and submit with pious patience to every dispensation ; it should be your greatest joy that the Lord reigns, and sits at the helm of all the world's affairs. Come what will you have reason to rejoice in it, because it is a blessing, and is intended to fit you for your mansion in your Father's house ; *for all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them that are the called, according to his purpose.*

3d. Amongst you, let not the heathenish names, and more especially the heathenish notions of *chance, misfortune*, in any wise prevail, as if these governed the world, and not the Lord Jehovah. Such sentiments have an evil tendency upon the mind, and greatly dishonour God ; who superintends the affairs, even of this insignificant world, with such particular regard, that a sparrow does not fall to the ground without his knowledge, permission ; yea, appointment. Therefore fear and honour him.

4th, You, of the abundant mercy of our God, are " begotten again to a lively hope of an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that " *fadeth not away.*" 1 Pet. i. 34, and whilst in the body to be absent from home ; yea profess to have here no abiding city, but are strangers and pil-

pilgrims on the earth. See that your whole conduct comport with this your profession; let there be no cause for the adversaries of the truth, to say, "these men are as fond of earth, and earthly things, as we who esteem it our portion, and make no profession of higher attainments." Your character is described, and your duty set forth by the great teacher of the Gentiles in these words, "if ye then be risen with Christ, ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God; seek those things which are above, set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" Coloss. iii. 1, 2, 3. You are to live under a heart-reviving expectation "of that blessed hope; and the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ." Tit. ii, 13. Therefore,

5thly, Live in a constant, conscientious, devout and religious use of all the means of grace; God has joined the means and the end together, in no wise do ye put them asunder. The truth of grace will best discover itself, by a cordial affection to the word, and ways of the Lord. You know the doctrines you maintain are said to lead to licentiousness, it is therefore incumbent upon you, to wipe off the false aspersions by all possible means; and no argument you can produce will be so forcible in your favour, as a holy life and conversation. Besides, none have such motives, and powerful incentives to holiness, as you have. The victory is already obtained, and the land contended for is at present possessed; you therefore fight not for the field which is already won, but

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to bind and subdue your enemies, who have received each a mortal wound.

You are not to scale the deathful wall, or enter the bloody breach with your lives in your hands; this the great captain of your salvation hath done in his own person; and entirely routed sin and satan. You may boldly say, in respect of all that rise up against you, "I will not fear for God is on my side; and I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

S E R.





S E R M O N VIII.



2 P E T E R i. i.

*Simon Peter a servant and an apostle
of Jesus Christ, to them that have
obtained like precious faith with us,
through the righteousness of God, and
our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

SO long as we live in houses of clay, and
take up our abode in corruptible bodies,
so long we shall have need to give diligence,
to add to our faith, virtue, to virtue knowledge,
&c. to the end we may be established in the truth,
as it is in Jesus, and under the influences of the
Holy Ghost may grow up into a meetness for the
enjoyment of the inheritance of the saints in light.
Our apostle was so well aware of this, that he
told the churches to whom he wrote this epistle,
his resolution (so long as he should tabernacle
below,) was, “to stir up their pure minds by
“putting them in remembrance,” ver. 13, for
the things we have been taught, and things of
the greatest importance too, we are apt to let
slip out of our mind; and that which is our in-
dis-

dispensable duty to discharge and practice, we too frequently either totally neglect, or grow remiss and careless in the performance of. It surely then deserves to be ranked amongst the foremost of our blessings, that we have the ministers of God's most holy word, to watch over us, warn us, and by repeated admonitions call back to our memory the truths we have been instructed in concerning Jesus, and his blessed gospel; and by warm and pathetic exhortations to awaken us to diligence and duty.

The epistles wrote by Peter, are called general, or (catholica,) being not intended for any particular church, but for the use of all the established churches in the world, and for all that should afterwards be established in the faith as it is in Jesus, and built upon the rock of everlasting ages to the end of time. In the former of these letters to the churches, he encourages believers to a patient suffering for the sake of Christ, by the example of the captain of their salvation, who was made perfect through suffering; and in the latter he cautions them to beware of false teachers, who should arise and bring in damnable heresies, drawing many aside to follow their pernicious ways, Ch. ii. 1, 2, and exhorts them to a serious and steady practice of godliness, and to persevere therein to the end. And in order to give greater weight to his words, and support them by the authority of inspiration, he subscribes his own hand unto his writings. In the former epistle, he calls himself by the name of Peter, the name given him by our blessed Lord, when he openly confessed him to be Christ the Son of God,

God, Math. xvi, 18, but in this, he joins also his name Simon, or Simeon; probably the name given him by his parents at his circumcision. It is common for us in England to have two names; the one peculiar to the family of which we are born, and the other given us by our parents or friends in our dedication to God in the ordinance of baptism. Our apostle by his name *Simon*, was reminded of the rock from whence he was hewn, and by his name *Peter*, of that rock his name imported, and on which he as a believer, and the whole christian church was built. Our name also, which denotes our family, should put us in mind from whom we originally sprung; and whatever some may boast of nobler blood, of ancient and superiour worth in their ancestry; all should remember, and be humbled at the thought, they sprung from guilty Adam, and are although of noble race, the corrupt branches of a corrupt root. Our christian name, (like that of Peter's) should call back into our minds what was transacted when this name was given; what those covenant engagements were, of which the water we were then baptized in was the seal; how far we have been mindful of, and attended to them since, and whenever this name is called upon us, we should consider it as a monitor, speaking to our ears and hearts in words like these; "remember why thy name was given, what was intended by it, and be ashamed of thy unfaithfulness."

Our apostle having subscribed his name, he next subjoins his office and this is twofold; first, general, a servant; second, special and particular, an apostle. 1st, *A servant*, all true believers are

servants, and it is their greatest pleasure so to be; for the service of God is first an honourable service, *I had rather*, says holy David, *be a door-keeper, in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.* Ps. lxxxiv. 10. 2d, This service is most profitable, *for the gift of God is eternal life.* Rom. vi. 23, and these are the wages Jesus will reward the labours of his servants withal, *for where I am*, (saith he) *there shall my servants be also.* John xii. 26. God's servants are the only free men, for all that are engaged in the service of sin and satan are wretched slaves; but Jesus has made the believer free, and *he is free indeed.* How honourably does the psalmist speak of this, Ps. cxvi. 16, *O Lord, truly I am thy servant, thou hast loosed my bonds;* and Peter in the passage before us calls himself a servant of Jesus Christ. 2d, *An apostle*, by special mission from the Lord Christ, to publish the glad tidings of salvation *to every creature;* the word *apostle* means an ambassador, a legate, one sent to transact the affairs of another; in the common acceptance, one of the twelve sent forth by Christ to preach and publish his gospel to a world of sinners. Peter takes care in both his epistles to make mention of his office, that he was an apostle, and that also of Jesus Christ; and indeed if all that pretend to preach the gospel, are not like Peter SENT of Jesus Christ, they will be of little use to the people.

He next proceeds to describe the people for whose use he was about to write, and these are such *as have obtained precious faith.* The gospel was to be preached to *every creature*, this was the command first given to the apostles, Mark

xvi, 15, and this command is still in force, and to be observed by all that go forth to preach the gospel; yet the epistles, whether particular or general, are limited to a church or churches.

Hence, for men in a natural state to read the apostolic writings with appropriating ideas, as if they had a right to the things contained therein, is no less absurd and disceptive, than for a man to take into his hands the writings of his neighbour's estate, and while he reads over his revenues, claims them for his own. This is your peculiar treasure believers, meditate day and night on what is written purposely for your good; often walk abroad into the field of the scripture, you will meet with the most desirable company, here you will meet with, and you may talk with Jesus; if ye are ignorant, here you may be taught wisdom secretly; if you are at any time wounded, here you may find a sovereign, efficacious balm; in a word "the scriptures are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

But that I may not detain you any longer in prefacing on the surface of my text, while marrow and fatness lies in abundance at the bottom, I shall

First, Lay open to you, and enlarge upon the *preciousness* of the *faith* here spoken of.

Second, The manner of it's being obtained.

Third, Of the sameness of this *faith*, in all that obtain it.

1st,

1st, Of *precious faith*, the apostle carefully distinguishes it from every other kind of faith by the epithet *precious*, as having something in it's nature superior and more excellent than any other faith, and for which, it is more valuable and of greater worth.

Divines have generally spoken of faith as distinguished into historical, temporary, miracle-working, and justifying, or as in our text, *precious*. Paul writing to Titus, mentions two kinds of faith, Ch. i, 14, the one he calls, *common faith*, the other, the faith of *God's elect*; I shall not stay at present to make any enquiry into the apostle's distinction, or whether any distinction was intended; nor shall I stay to examine the truth and accuracy of those several distinctions noted; it being my design at present not to treat you with shells, but with the kernels of truth; and to lay open before you in order to this, some of the peculiar excellencies of the precious faith our apostle speaks of.

First, this *faith*, may be called precious, in respect to the scarcity of it; it is not like a common weed that grows spontaneous on every spot of ground, nor is to be found every where amongst professors; many talk of Jesus, and call themselves by the name of Christ, who never yet were put into the possession of precious faith.

Many set light by the scripture method of salvation, and vilify the preachers of the gospel, as men that through the preaching of faith overthrow good works and abolish the law, supposing that (like Naaman the syrian) they must do some great and good thing whereby to obtain salvation; and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as all that is required of them for acceptance with God, seems
a thing

a thing so easy and insignificant, that they despise and set it at nought, and in so doing, sufficiently prove themselves strangers to its preciousness and worth.

Many there are who know nothing more of faith or believing in Jesus, than that they can repeat a form of words, perhaps, taught them on their mother's lap, and which, (save that in the form and order of the church-service they have often repeated) in all their after-life they have never seriously compared with the word of God, or brought to the touch-stone of mature reason. This folly in mankind, and these deceptions concerning precious faith, might be exposed and enlarged upon abundantly; but this being beside my present purpose I pass by; these hints may serve to exhibit one reason why the faith of *God's elect* is called *precious*.

Faith in this view, may be compared to certain kinds of merchandise, or vendable commodities, whose prices fall and rise in proportion to their scarcity or plenty. I mean not by this as if I understood that faith could be bought and sold; but being (allow me the word) a scarce commodity, rarely to be met with in this degenerate and unbelieving age, it is so much the more precious. Believers are God's jewels, Mal. iii. 17, but jewels are scarce things, and are so much the more precious; pebbles are plentiful, therefore little esteemed; few, very few have obtained precious faith in comparison of those that have not, and therefore this faith is truly precious.

2d. This *faith* may be called precious, because of its real intrinsic worth, when the spirit of God has so far convinced a man of sin as to shew him
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the necessity of believing in Jesus for life and salvation, he then begins (and never till then) to perceive somewhat of the true worth of faith; such an one finds it not so easy a thing to believe in Christ as he perhaps aforetime imagined, and as many would insinuate. He now sees the law of God to be holy, just, and good; its language alarming to his soul is, *pay me that thou owest*; thou hast not continued in all things written to do them, therefore *cursed art thou*; he sees by the light of God's spirit shining into his soul, and closely applying the holy precepts of this righteous law unto his heart and life, that he is justly condemned by its equitable sentence; and from what he now observes of his fallen and feeble state, he utterly despairs of doing any thing that can atone for his past offences, or procure him favour with his offended maker; and under such a sight and sense of sin and wretchedness, to cast the soul filthy and defiled as it appears with its enormous load of guilt on Jesus Christ, to be firmly persuaded that God in him is reconciled to the sinner that believes; is such an act as the soul not finding any power to perform, would give ten thousand worlds to be possessed of.

But this faith is too valuable for created things to buy; would a man give all the substance of his house for faith, it would be far too little; could he convert the whole terraqueous globe to solid gold, and accumulate treasures of silver numberless as grains of sand, and give all this for faith, it would be rejected as a price too small. The blessings of heaven are not to be purchased with the corruptible things of our polluted earth, however our deluded minds may warp to them and set
 • a value

a value on them, they cannot buy us heaven, nor bring its blessings down into our souls.

But will not many prayers prevail, to obtain this *precious faith*? No, if they are presented as a price, as having something in them which may deserve the blessing. Our prayers like all our other works are full of imperfections, and if they merit any thing it must be wrath; so that the precious faith we speak of, is too valuable to be bought by these. Cannot this precious faith it may be asked, be obtained by good works? I answer, I know of no good works that do not spring from this precious faith, for the word of God knows none; and the effect cannot be prior to the cause by which alone it can exist. But what men commonly call good works, such as reading the word of God, hearing sermons, doing justly, shewing mercy, &c. (not to say they flow from wrong principles,) are very imperfect in the best of men, and except our innate pride should prompt us to set an undue value upon them, we can never be led to think them an equivalent for *precious faith*.

3dly. Faith might well be called *precious* by the apostle, and such it should be esteemed by us, considered as an effect of the death of the Lord Christ; and a blessing which to purchase for poor sinners, he emptied all his sacred veins, and paid the inconceivably great and amazing price of his most precious blood. Somewhat of this is alluded to in the former epistle by Peter, chap. i. 19. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things
"as silver and gold, but with the precious blood
"of Christ." As without the sufferings of Christ for sinners, there could have been no gospel holding forth salvation by him to be believed; so
nei-

neither without the powerful operation of his spirit procured by his death for this purpose, could any sinner ever have believed. This therefore makes faith to be precious indeed; when we can estimate the inconceivable worth of the redeemer's blood, then, and not till then, we may conceive adequately of the preciousness of that faith which was purchased by it. But it is worthy to be observed, as it so much redounds to the glory of God, and manifests the love, the exceeding greatness of his love to us ward that what was by him so dearly bought, is freely bestowed on sinners without money, and without price, as a gift most rich and invaluable; and as such the scriptures of truth ever make a grateful mention of it. "Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come buy and eat, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price." Is. lv. 1. again, "Ye are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God," Eph. ii. 8. To you it is given in behalf of Christ to believe, Phillip. i. 29. And again, it is called, the faith of the operation of God, Coloss. ii. 12. &c. for all which reasons faith appears to be truly precious.

4thly. This faith must needs be precious, seeing it gives worth and excellency to all the works of the believer; *what is not of faith is sin*, but having believed we now speak and act to the glory of God. This *faith* is like a tree planted by rivers of waters, which produces fruit of the most excellent kind; faith is not a plant growing on the barren soil of nature, for an unregenerate person cannot believe; but is itself a fruit of the spirit, Gal. v. 22. raised by a divine power in the
soul

soul created a new in Christ Jesus, and planted in the fertile Soil of an heart renewed by grace. This *faith* bears in the believing heart the soul consoling fruits of love, joy, peace, spiritual mindedness, and every gracious disposition corresponding with its own nature; for as is the tree such will be its fruit. *Faith* fixes its eye on Jesus, and has respect unto all the commandments of God; the believing soul is led forth in willing obedience to the sincere practice of piety, justice, and mercy, not only as this is a duty incumbent, but from holy principles of love and affection, for *faith* worketh by love, Gal. v. 6. And as faith in every act, as well as in its very existence has respect unto Jesus, all the works of faith are pleasing and acceptable to God in and through him, for in him is the father well pleased, and the believer being created a new in him, is accepted through him, Eph. i. 6. Abel offered a sacrifice unto God more acceptable than Cain, because he offered in faith; Cain brought his offering unto the Lord of the fruit of the ground, his offering was an index of his mind which was void both of all sense of the evil of sin, and of faith in that blood which should make atonement for it; therefore unto Cain and his offering the Lord had not respect; but Abel offered a bloody sacrifice, looking by faith unto, and typical of the sacrifice of the lamb of God; therefore unto Abel and to his offering, the Lord had respect. Abel's faith recommended his work, and might therefore well be esteemed precious, for by this he obtained witness that he was righteous, God himself testifying of his gifts, Heb. xi. 4. It is on the account of this precious faith, that it can ever be said to any of the sons of Adam, Go thy way, eat thy bread with

joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works. Eccle. ix. 7.

5thly. Faith is so excellent in all its uses to the believer, that it is well called precious; a few of which are these following:—1st. It takes off the believer from all dependance in himself, and trust in his own righteousness, and leads him to Jesus as the fountain of every blessing; so that the soul is wholly staid on Christ for its salvation and happiness both in time and eternity. When the devil, the accuser of the brethren labours by satanical suggestions, to rally the believers past and pardoned sins, and draw them up a fresh in the most formidable order to wound and cause to bleed again the conscience that has been bound up and healed; faith immediately looks to the cross of Christ, fixes the eye of the soul on the bleeding, wounded body of the son of God, meditates on the inestimable worth of that blood that gushes forth in crimson streams from every pore of the redeemer's bruised body, and interprets its most expressive language to the ear and understanding of the assaulted soul, in sweeter, better, and more pleasing accents *than that of Abel.*

Is the believer conscious, painfully conscious, of manifold weaknesses in his best services; when he would do good, is evil present with him, does the law make demands upon him larger and greater than he finds abilities to answer, finds he by daily experience that in him, that is, in his flesh there dwells no good thing. What or who can relieve him in such case? Nothing, none but Christ; and herein appears the excellency of *precious faith*, this, leads him to Jesus, shews the largest demands of the law answered and fulfilled in him, shews him

him to be the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe, and casts the soul upon him as it's substitute and surety, who has brought in an everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24, with which righteousness the Lord is well pleased. Is. xlii. 21, and for the sake of which, and in and through which the believer is accepted as righteous with God, 2 Cor. v. 21. There is nothing like faith for emptying the soul of self-dependance, and all self seeking, for it respects nothing but Christ, aims to exalt nothing but Christ, is concerned about nothing so much as the honour of Christ, and therefore leads the believer to look to, and expect all manner of blessings and blessedness from this exuberant fountain.

2d. *Precious faith*, does not only receive from Christ's fullness as at a distance and existing apart from the believer, but so casts the soul upon him, that it becomes one with him, a living member of that body, of which Jesus is the glorious head, and thereby gives it an assurance of the following things, 1st, His tender and compassionate love and affection; for as a man naturally loves himself, and the least and most insignificant member of his body shares in the affection of the whole; so Jesus cannot but entertain a cordial affection for the smallest and meanest members of his body mystical.

2d, Care to preserve from harm; one member of the body cannot suffer, but the whole will be effected, nor can a member be cut off but the body thereby becomes imperfect; now can any thing be conceived more desirable than to be the object of the Redeemer's love and care? *He that toucheth thee, saith the Lord, toucheth the apple*

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ple of mine eye; and when omnipotence is engaged in our favour, to secure us from any hurtful assaults of our enemies; omnipotence our guard, and heavenly love concerned to bring about our happiness; as must really be the case in this consideration, one may well say with a triumphing believer in the like view of things, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people that rise up against me, for God is on my right hand therefore I shall not greatly fall." Ps. iii, 6, 16, 8.

3d. As the members of the natural body are governed, influenced, and supplied from the head, so the believer in this union with Christ, is wholly under the government and influence of his grace, and receives all supplies from him as his head. This privilege and blessedness is beautifully set forth by the apostle to the Ephesians, ch. iv, 15, 16, that we "may grow up into him in all things, which is the head even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love."

And 4th, As faith unites the soul to Jesus, so that in the apostle's language, *we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*. Eph. v. 30, The believer is hereby ascertained of a happiness proportioned to, and (in duration) commensurate with that, his Lord and living head enjoys; and if Jesus once said, *where I am, there shall my servants be*, how much more may this be applied to his members, where I the head am, there shall the members of my body be. From these brief

hints

hints of the excellent uses of faith, we may be led to observe somewhat of its *preciousness*; but let us yet go on.

Third, Faith will appear to be precious indeed and truly excellent in its uses, when it is further observed, that every blessing the believing soul is possessor of, tastes or enjoys more than any natural unconverted man, is brought into his soul by this *precious faith*. The new and spiritual life he now lives, although in order of time prior to his *precious faith*, yet is only enjoyed through it, and was created for and to this end. Whatever might have been ordained and purposed in the eternal councils of God concerning any sinner, as this is a secret with God, no man can attain the knowledge of it, untill faith makes manifest the hidden purpose to the soul; this therefore turns over the everlasting volumes carefully peruses every page and line in the book of life, and brings at length the pleasing the delightful news to the believer, that his name is written there. Or give me leave to say the same thing in other words. *Faith* is that which brings home to the wounded conscience, a comfortable sense of pardoned sin; there is no possible way described or taught in the books of *reason*, *scripture*, or *experience*, how a sinner under a sense of sin may be comforted, how a conscience bleeding under the guilt of multiplied transgressions can be healed and eased, and how one that is *wounded in spirit* can be made whole, besides this one way by *precious faith*.

A pardon intended by the prince of heaven, a pardon sealed by the eternal king of glory, will not be sufficient to silence the tormenting clamours of an accusing conscience; distressing

doubts will harrass and disquiet the mind; and a thousand perplexing fears will distress and disturb the soul, untill *precious faith* in the blood of Jesus, scatters and disperses these *troublers* of the heart, by opposing the sufficiency of the Redeemer's blood, to atone for the most multiplied and aggravated crimes. This, in the word of God, is set forth as a special use of *precious faith*; as it leads the soul and unites it to Jesus, so it brings back from his fullness and sufficiency that sense and assurance of pardon, that is accompanied with peace of conscience. Rom. vi. 1, *being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*; and in the verse next following my text, the apostle wishes to the church an increase of *grace and peace*, but this can only be obtained through the knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord, and faith is the key that opens the cabinet of divine mysteries and shews us the father propitious, accessible, lovely and desirable in the face of Jesus Christ.

I would not after all I have said or may yet say of *precious faith*, have any to conceive of it as something excellent or even existing at all, but as it has respect unto the Lord Christ, and the sweet gospel-truths concerning him; faith was never called forth into being until some promise was made which was to be believed; which being first made to Adam concerning the seed of the woman, here now was need of faith, which if Adam was put into the possession of, must needs be precious as it would lead him to Christ, and although not yet manifested in the flesh, would notwithstanding bring back from Christ, peace and tranquility of mind.

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This *precious faith* therefore which exists by, and is ever conversant about the things that pertain to Jesus, is to the soul any thing or every thing, whereby Jesus may be glorified by it; does the soul desire to look on Jesus in the garden, in Herod's judgment-hall, or on the cross, *faith* becomes an eye to it, and shews the man of sorrows growing pale in death, emptying all his sacred veins, and issuing from thence a flood, that buries in oblivion all his sins. Doth the soul desire to take hold on Jesus, *faith* becomes a hand, and taking hold of his strength, enjoys peace in him, Is. xxvii, 5, and draws and derives that strength from him, that she can sing with Israel's monarch, "the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid." Ps. xxvii, 1.

And if the soul desires not only to see but to taste also that the Lord is gracious; *precious faith* with officious hand brings from the fullness of Jesus, all that can be desired to cheer and regale the drooping mind. *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed,* said our Lord, *and he that eateth me shall live by me;* the Jews were offended at these things, and said, *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* John vi. 52, 55. Now *precious faith* explains this to the soul, and gives it to feed hereon, as the most delicious food; *faith* represents it and imparts it as the living bread, which whosoever eateth shall live for ever; and thus the believing soul feeds on Jesus, and *lives by him,* John vi. 57, takes from the *fullness* there is in the Redeemer, and is enriched with all spiritual blessings.

4th, Another property of *faith*, and for which it is deservedly called *precious* is, it's substantiating
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shadows, and giving being (as one might say) to non-entities; it is the true philosopher's stone, it turns all to gold; pain to pleasure, fear to hope, grief to joy, and the most afflictive providences into gracious dispensations. The apostle to the Hebrews tells us, *faith is the substance of things hoped for*, ch. xi. 1, what then is the believer's expectation and hope? Hopes he for grace to help him in every time of need, while he is sojourning here below? Faith, puts him into the immediate possession of this grace, by which he is supported for the present, and his hope receives a confirmation of a never-failing supply. Does the believer hope for heaven hereafter? Faith brings down the foretastes thereof at present into his soul.

All the promises in the word of God are like an estate in reversion; now *faith* lays hold on the things promised, and makes future things present, so assures the soul of the reality of them, that it tastes a present blessedness in them, and joyfully feasts upon them. Promises however precious in themselves and although made by a faithful God, and in covenant-mercy, yet stand as a mere blank in the sacred pages, are like a number of cyphers without an initial figure; but precious faith puts itself at the head of them, and gives them their proper value. I have heard of one, being at the point of death, and when in great anguish of spirit under the dreadful lashes of a guilty conscience, his friends endeavoured to comfort him, by reminding him of the promises of God, and exhorting him to stay himself thereon, replied, alas, alas, the plaister will not stick; poor soul he wanted precious faith to assure his aching heart that
these

these promises belonged to him. What comfort would it give to a man pinched with hunger, and ready to perish for want of food and raiment, to shew him, or even put into his hands the writings of some nobleman's estate, or to point him to the splendid equipages and sumptuous table of his opulent neighbour? Would this satisfy his craving appetite, or cover and warm his naked body? Would not the very sight of these things rather aggravate than lessen his distress? So the promises of God recorded in his book for the comfort and support of his people, and which this apostle by reason of their super-eminent worth, calls *precious promises*, are so far from yielding any comfort to an unbeliever, that they rather heighten his sorrow and wound him deeper, while he has nothing to assure him that these are his; the plaster will not stick to his troubled conscience, nor yield any healing virtue to his wounded spirit.

But *faith* unlooses the seals of the sacred book, ransacks with unspeakable delight each page and line, and with the pleasing language of appropriation, says of every precious promise, *this is mine*. *Faith* hears the voice of God, when reading in his blessed book, and considers not the things that are spoken as words of form, or that the threatenings to the wicked and impenitent, or the promises made to the faithful and pious, are things that have a peradventure joined to their event; but looks upon them and regards them in respect of their certainty, as if already accomplished; every word of God in the estimation of faith, is real fact.

5th, As *precious faith*, is the eye of the soul, as has been observed, so it well deserves to be noted,

noted, that the sight thereof is remarkably and admirably strong. It is said of the eagle, that that bird can fix it's eye, and look full on the beams of the mid-day sun; I know not how far this is true of the eagle; but this I know, *precious faith*, can look full and steady and even delights to gaze on what is infinitely more bright; I mean the most dazzling attributes of the deity, *holiness* and *justice*. As the natural and naked eye cannot bear to look on the body of the unclouded sun, because of the unsufferable splendor of his beams; so neither can the soul in an unconverted state, bear to look on the infinite purity and inflexible justice of God, for having no medium to look through, no mediator to stand between, the most holy man that ever lived, (if any out of Christ could be called holy,) would be utterly confounded, dashed out of countenance, and be glad in order to escape the intollerable glare of their uncreated brightness to hide his head in everlasting night. But *precious faith*, as I have said, views and contemplates with pleasure and delight, the infinite *holiness* of God, leads out the soul in pursuit of the like amiable quality, and animates it with an insatiable desire to be conformed more and more into it's nature. Faith leads the soul to look on Jesus, it's living head, and with whom it is made one, as the *brightness* of this excellent glory; and while he is thus viewed, as transfigured by faith, the soul feels somewhat like Peter on Mount-tabor, when he said, *Lord it is good for us to be here.*

Again, the justice of God which will one day be as a rod of iron to chastise devils and disobedient men, is to the believer like the golden sceptre

tre which king Ahasuerus held forth to queen Esther, and by which she was permitted and emboldened to present her suit unto him. Esther is said put on her royal apparel when she was about to appear before the king, so the believer makes his approaches to the throne of grace, in royal apparel, even in the righteousness of the Redeemer, which *faith* cloaths and adorns the soul withal; and thus appearing, nothing that may contribute to the believer's happiness can be denied him; justice itself is on his side, pleads his cause, and procures his petition. Hence is the believer's encouragement to pray and look up for every needful blessing, for to the heirs of grace and glory, no good thing shall be withholden. Ps. lxxxiv. 1. *Ask, said our Lord, that ye may receive, and have your joy complete; ye have not,* says the apostle James, *because ye ask not;* the prayer of faith is never disregarded. 1 Pet. i. 6th. *They that are after the flesh,* says Paul, *do mind the things of the flesh;* Rom. viii. 3. and the eye of sense is mostly conversant about sensual things; the eye of reason can look a little higher still, and amuse itself with curious enquiries and deep speculations; but is still confined within certain narrow limits that it cannot pass; whereas *precious faith*, has an eye both strong and piercing, and looks beyond the little limits of created things, for *the things that are seen are temporal*, but the things which *are not seen*, and which faith is conversant about, *are eternal.* *Precious faith*, throws back the curtain of time, and leads the soul into the eternal world; faith is a *Caleb* it goes courageously to spy out the good land, brings whole clusters from *Eschol*, and encourages the soul to go up and possess

Faith represents to the soul, the veil torn from top to bottom, and a way accessible into the holy of holies. *Faith* stands not in the outer court, but enters in by the new and living way "that Jesus has consecrated by his blood," within the veil whither *HE* the great high-priest is entered. *Faith* like an honest ambassadour, or rather like a diligent and curious spy, marks well whatever is desirable in the good land, writes down its delicacies, describes its spicy mountains, and its oily rivers, and assures the soul that it is a good and desirable land, and in comparison of which, all the most fertile lands below are but as a barren wilderness, and all the boasted things of time are but as dross and dung. *Faith* sees laid up in heaven, and reserved by an omnipotent arm "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away," 1 Pet. i. 4, and assures the soul, "that eye has not seen, ear hath not heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God has treasured up for his people," but says *precious faith* these treasures are discovered to me by the spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 9-10. But *precious faith*, in this tour to the heavenly canaan, although she observes crowns and kingdoms, &c. laid up in store for the believer, yet these she regards as nothing in comparison of that more desirable vision on which she feasts her wishful eyes, even *the king in his beauty*, this is what *faith* esteems the perfection of happiness, the very life and soul of bliss and felicity, even where all is tranquility and peace.

7th. Bear with me whilst I add one instance more in which *faith* appears of so great use, that it may well be called *precious*, and this respects the

the providences of God, concerning which the believer will often have reason to subscribe to the truth of those words, *clouds and darkness are round about him*, Ps. xcvi. 2.

There is no state in life without its peculiar trials, and a variation in circumstances will but be to vary our trials; these are truths in some measure applicable to all men, but christians have their trials not as men, but peculiar to them as men professing godliness, and being the disciples of Jesus Christ. Now *faith* is most excellent in its use to the believer; whatever his trials are, and from what quarter soever they come, for *faith* has respect always unto God, not only as the God of grace, but as the God of nature and of providence; and therefore never supposes any such accidents in the world, as happen without the knowledge and permission of the most high; for this *faith* would be to depose the king of kings, and refuse God the government of his own world and creatures. *Faith* has therefore learnt the holy and the happy art, of laying low the mountains, and aspiring hills, of filling deep and otherwise impassible vallies, and making every crooked path straight; for *faith* is ever speaking to the soul in the time of dark dispensations in the words of Jesus to his wondering disciples, "What I do now ye know not, but ye shall know hereafter," John xiii. 7. Sometimes the believer in his passage through the world, is called to walk through deep waters; and then *faith* is more than a staff unto him; for it leads him to Jesus, and assures him of his presence and support; Peter's *faith* once failed, but it cast him on Christ and Christ has never yet failed. If the believer's

trials

trials are of a fiery nature, so that he walks as it were through the midst of devouring flames, faith still preserves him from the consuming power thereof; and as the prophet Isaiah has it, draws water from the wells of salvation, so that the fire forgets to burn.

It often happens in the believers fiery trials through the divine blessing, as it did to *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abadnego*, of whom it is said they were cast into the fire bound, but the fire burned their bands, but hurt not their bodies, so that they walked loose amidst the burning fiery furnace. Believers too often have their hearts engaged with some worldly thing that rivets those affections to earth, that ought to be placed on heaven and heavenly things; to remedy which evil, divine goodness may permit them to be plunged as it were in deep waters, and sees good to lead them through the fire, but all this proceeds from parental affection and everlasting love to them, and is intended as a means whereby to heal those praved inclinations and to bring them to the wealthy place. Faith views all the providences of God in this light, and therefore teaches the soul with calmness to submit unto them, and to rejoice under them; and even to be thankful for them. James i. 2, assuring the soul that the chastenings of the Lord are marks of favour, seeing "he correcteth every son whom he receiveth, and maketh all things work together for good to them that love him, to them that are the called according to his purpose." Heb. xii. 6. Rom. viii. 28.

Observations upon the whole.

From what has been delivered it appears that the true believer may well be the most joyful man, seeing

seeing he has many reasons for joy and gladness, which others have not, and 1st. What the free and abundant grace of God has done for him; he like others was by nature a child of wrath, and a creature deserving hell and eternal damnation, having a heart and nature defiled, and the image of his maker spoiled and defaced in his very formation. Ps. li. 5, and from this source of corruption, did like others go on to fulfil the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. Eph. ii. 2; but now through faith he has the assurance given him that he shall not go down into the pit, Jesus the Saviour having become a ransom for him, Job xxxiii. 24. As through the agency of the eternal spirit, he has passed from death unto life, and is "trans-
" lated from the power of darkness into the king-
" dom of God's dear son, having obtained re-
" demption through his blood even the forgive-
" nesses of sin," Coloss. i. 13. 14.

What he through the discriminating grace of God now is; no longer an heir of hell, but of heaven, *an heir of God and a joint heir*, of eternal blessedness *with Jesus Christ*. Rom. viii. 17. adopted into the family of heaven, a citizen of the new Jerusalem, and a living member of the Redeemer's mystical body. What a spring of heavenly consolation must it open in the believing breast, to think, that omnipotence is engaged for him against all opponent power, and that he is the object of that love which is unchangeable; hence in the exulting language of the princely prophet, he can triumphantly say, "Behold God is my salvation, I will trust and not
" be afraid," for now can such an one "draw water
" with joy from the wells of salvation," Is. xii. 2. 3.
How must it fill the believer's heart with gladness
more

more than the men of the world taste or know when their corn and wine, and oil are most increased, Ps. *lv. 7.* to have it firmly settled in their hearts, that wheresoever they are, the eyes of God are upon them, and an angelic guard is appointed for their safety and protection. Ps. *xxxii. 8.* *xxxiv. 7.* Again third, What abundant cause of joy must it yield, to think, that yet a little while, a few struggles more, and I shall bid a final farewell to perishable things; I shall gain the wished for port, and enter into that joy that my Lord has purchased and reserves, and into the rest that remains for the people of God, Heb. *iv. 9.* Then I shall no longer see him whom my soul longeth for through a glass darkly, but I shall see him face to face, I shall see the king in his beauty, and the land that is afar off. And lastly, how must it rejoice the heart of a believer, to be assured that whatever shall befall him in his passage through this world, is an incident appointed, and numbered amongst all other means ordained to secure him an interest in the world to come; hence is the assurance of his heart, with blessed Paul, *I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Rom. *viii. 38, 39.*

Observation 2d. From what has been laid down of the state of a believer, it is justly and reasonably to be expected, he should be the most holy man, seeing he has motives, encouragements, helps, and assistances, that others have not. The remembrance of mercies already vouchsafed, should

should be a continual and powerful excitement to gratitude, love and obedience; because grace has abounded shall we continue to sin that it may abound? God forbid. *Go in peace*, said our Lord to the woman taken in adultery, *and sin no more*; let not my kindness and clemency towards thee be an encouragement to repeat thy wickedness, but rather let a sense of my goodness lead thee to repentance for thy former follies.

It is peculiar to the believer to have the *fear of God in his heart*, and the design of this is, that he *may not depart from God*, nor sin against him; he has been made to know the bitterness of sin, and can never forget the gall and the wormwood; therefore should often call to mind his wretched state when sovereign grace first found him; how he was then like the wretched infant spoken of by Ezekiel the prophet; and that mercy which was so abundant toward him, should leave him deeply sensible of his obligations to love and adore his great and gracious deliverer. Has God so eminently distinguished him by his grace that he is an adopted son, and an heir of eternal glory? The remembrance of this, should inspire his soul with a holy emulation to walk as one whose expectations are wholly on things above; this is required by the apostle to the Colossians in those words, *if ye then be risen with Christ, set your affections on things above*, ch. iii, 1. They who have had in time past such views and expectations, have both with their lips and in their lives confessed that they were but pilgrims here below, and were seeking a better country. Heb. xi. 13, 14, and truly, said the same apostle, *our conversation is in heaven*.

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It is true, believers in common with other men, have the world, the flesh, and the devil, militating against them; but then herein lies their superior and distinguished advantage, they have a power engaged on their side, infinitely superior to all that can oppose them, for *as the hills stand round about Jerusalem, even so doth the Lord stand round about his people.* Ps. cxxv. 2. Here is their defence; and *it is the Lord that worketh in them to will and do of his good pleasure,* here is their spiritual strength.

Lastly, It may be observed, that a believer must needs be the most happy man; seeing he is delivered from what must always imbitter the sweetest cups of an unbeliever, and mingle with his purest pleasures ingredients more distasteful than that of gall and wormwood. I mean, the frequent clamours and accusations of a guilty conscience, the disquieting apprehensions of an offended God, the fear of death, and the awful judgment of God, together with the endless woes prepared for the ungodly. The believer no longer subjected to these fears, he runs with chearfulness in the ways of God's commandments, and experiences *wisdom's ways to be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths to be the paths of peace.* Others may sometimes conceive of him, as one that is a stranger to pleasure, and hurries on a tedious life without enjoying it; whereas on the contrary, those very things they esteem so desirable, and in which they make the pleasure of life to consist, are the very things that he rejoices and finds it his greatest happiness to be delivered from. The believer finds the truth of what inspiration has recorded, *that godliness is profitable both for this life, and for that*

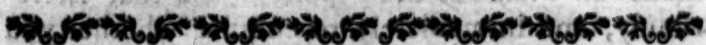
that to come; and finds himself happy in what the Lord has done for him already, and happy in expectation of greater and more perfect felicity to be enjoyed hereafter.

I shall need say little, I presume, by way of application; one principal use I would have you make on what has been spoken, and that is, seriously, and immediately to enquire whether you have obtained this precious faith; it must be allowed I think by all of you who have attended to the use and excellency thereof, that it is a blessing much to be desired, yea more than gold, or much fine gold.

Without faith you will never be able to lift up your heads in the great day of the Lord, Jesus the judge will condemn the unbelievers, with all the liars and the abominable to everlasting banishment from God and the glory of his power, and such must have their portion, and a dreadful portion it will be, in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, Rev. xxi, 8, *Examine yourselves therefore, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates, 2. Cor. xiii. 5.*



S E R M O N IX.



2 P E T E R i. i.

*Simon Peter a servant and an apostle
of Jesus Christ, to them that have
obtained like precious faith with us,
through the righteousness of God, and
our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

OF this precious faith in my text, I have spoken pretty largely in my former discourse from these words; so that time constrained me to postpone what remained in the latter part of my text untill a more seasonable opportunity; and as kind providence has now favoured me with that opportunity, I thankfully embrace it, and pray that the good God would make it a profitable one both for you and me. I should not have called your attention so closely, and detained you so long in describing the preciousness of faith, but that I know man's natural pride is with so much difficulty brought to stoop and seek salvation thereby; that every other means must be tried, and every expedient sifted in order that man may have somewhat to ascribe to himself.

Man

Man was originally made to live by his own righteousness, and although now fallen from God, and having lost all ability to perform the holy precepts of the law, to which life and salvation were promised, yet he naturally inclines to think there is some good thing in his broken and imperfect obedience which deserves to be rewarded. This very gross, and what if not corrected, will prove a fatal mistake, arises, I conceive, from man's natural blindness in not attending to the commandment which requires truth in the inward parts, and can dispense with no obedience that is not perfect; and from his own innate pride which sets too great a value on his own works, and from a disregard to the word of God, which holds forth salvation, as not attainable by works of any kind, but by faith in Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul has handled this point largely and so demonstratively in his several epistles to the churches, that nothing but blindness, pride and unbelief, can occasion a mistake therein.

The scriptures every where speak of salvation by Christ, *for to him give all the prophets witness,* and the apostle assures us, *there is not salvation in any other,* that *another foundation cannot be laid,* that *there is no other name given under heaven whereby we can be saved;* and our Lord himself, who best knew his errand into the world, tells us, that *whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life,* and that he is the way, and *no man cometh unto the father but by him.*

Many who read and pretend to receive instruction from the scriptures for working out their salvation, yet have their notions and ideas so dark and confused, that it is easy to perceive their

minds were never enlightened by the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. Such are they, who while they talk of salvation by Christ yet think some previous qualifications are necessary to recommend them to his favour and acceptance ; and that they must by a long train of pre-requisites, (all which are supposed to have something of merit in them) pave their way to the mediator, which being done, they tacitly make a demand on heaven, and seem to think it strange if any doubts should yet remain of their being accepted. Now it is evident such persons were never yet taught by the spirit of God, which spirit not only convinces men of the evil of sin, but of the insufficiency of any righteousness of their own, seeing the very fountain from whence these streams of holy works should proceed, is quite poisoned and corrupted, and that the very best of men in a state of unregeneracy and out of Christ, are “ all as an unclean thing, and their righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” Is. lxiv, 6. The holy scriptures know of no righteousness, that can silence the crying and large demands of the law of God, but the perfect obedience of Jesus ; nor allows any works as good in the eye of that perfect law, but such as flow from *faith* in the son of God ; so that all the good works of an unbeliever are but less flagrant sins, for in this state nothing is done, nothing can be done, with such singleness of eye to God’s glory, and with such purity of heart and fervency of affection, as his most holy law justly requires

God from the abundance of his mercy, and the exceeding richness of his grace, hath signified by his word, his good pleasure towards a sinful race,

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in bringing to everlasting happiness, and the enjoyment of himself in heavenly glory, all that should (renouncing and disclaiming all merit in themselves) believe on Jesus, and rely on his all perfectly finished work for their acceptance and salvation; but in order to cut of all glorying in an arm of flesh, and hide pride from man, what is declared in his blessed word, as the foundation of faith, can only be attended to, and cordially believed, through the efficiency of his blessed spirit.

Hence the apostle to the Ephesians saith, "God who is rich in mercy for the great love where- with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God." chap. ii, 4, 5, 8. And again, Phillip. i, 29, "to you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe," &c. And in the passage of our text, Peter wrote to them that had *obtained like precious faith*. To which words, that I may speak instructively, and by the divine blessing, edifyingly, I shall proceed agreeable to my proposal in shewing the manner of obtaining the *precious faith*, of which you have heard so many excellent things.

But first, Let it be noted that the words, *having obtained*, seem to imply that these persons so highly favoured in partaking of this inestimable gift were not always in the possession of it; before they obtained it they had it not, and since their obtaining it they stand indebted for it as a gift bestowed. I observe this first, that believers may not think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, but may be mindful of the rock from whence

whence they were hewn ; and the hole of the pit from whence they were digged ; for what have you to glory in my brethren, that you have not received, and if ye did receive it, why do ye glory as if ye had not received it, 1 Cor. iv. 7.

2d, That such as have not yet obtained *precious faith*, may not sink down in despondency and say there is no hope. Faith is not an hereditary blessing, it is not to them that are born of blood ; none are born believers, nor have any ever been taught faith by human teaching and by the *will of man* ; for all believers are taught of God, agreeable to those words of our Lord, “ it is written in the prophets, they shall all be taught of God, he therefore that hath heard and learned of the father cometh to me.” John vi. 45. No man ever yet in an unconverted state, carried himself so uprightly, and improved his natural abilities so diligently, and to such excellent purpose as either to attain by the light of nature to the knowledge of God and himself, or to deserve as the reward of his prudence, and superior sagacity the favour of God, or the precious gift of faith. Men in their natural state, may much excel one another in the strictness of their moral conduct, there may be something amiable in their deportment and behaviour, for which they may deserve the esteem and regard of their fellow-creatures, as being useful for society ; but still nature can never rise above its fountain head, all their works will be the works of nature still ; and to imagine that any thing we can do may deserve the grace of God, is to set too great a value on our own works, and to depreciate the real worth and excellency of that grace.

Men

Men of this character will seldom fail to fix an undue value on what they are, and on what they do; whereas a man taught of God, sees so much imperfection in all his performances, that he's ashamed to look upon them, blushes to consider them, and frankly owns they are of no real worth, and if at all regarded by God, it must be solely for the sake of Jesus Christ; hence we hear the apostle to Titus freely confessing, that what had been done for them, was merely of the good pleasure of God, Tit. iii. 5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and by the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Precious faith in my text is said to have been obtained, that is, as the original word imports, *by lot*, in which sense the same word is used, Luke i, 9, Acts i, 17, John xix, 24, and serves to confirm what I have been insisting upon, that as faith is the gift of God, so he gives it to whomsoever he will, and the spirit the agent in this work as the heavenly wind, bloweth where and when it listeth. Again, the text particularly noteth, that this *precious faith* is obtained *through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; hereby is excluded all our works from having any part in obtaining it; and what but a deceived heart, and a mistaken estimation of ourselves, and our poor performances, could ever lead us to think we could by any of our doings deserve the favour of that God, who has, (as though it were done on purpose to silence our haughty claims, and to stop every mouth in his presence) set forth his exceeding greatness and majesty, and
man's

man's nothingness and vanity in comparison thereof, in that striking passage of the prophet Is. ch. xl. 12, and following, in language so truly picturesque and affecting, that one would imagine a man need only read, in order to see himself the very nothing creature, he is there described to be. Let us turn to the passage and observe it. How awfully great and powerful must that being be, who in his strength has not only set fast the mountains, but takes up the *isles as a very little thing*; the vast abyss of mighty waters which fill the capacious bed of the seas, *he measureth in the hollow of his hand*, and the expanded *skies are meted with his span*, the dust which composes this huge terraqueous globe *he comprehendeth in a measure*, and the ponderous *bills* with all their massy load of rocks and trees, *he weighs in scales*, and holds the *ballances* in his hand. And what must frail and feeble man be when compared to this inconceivably great and glorious God? *Behold the nations*, all that encompass the habitable world from pole to pole, from east to west, are before him, *as a drop of a bucket*, and are counted, notwithstanding the value they may set upon themselves *as the small dust of the ballance*, ver. 15. And lest we should yet set some value upon what we do, as conceiving ourselves to be something, it is added, *all nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity*.

Now after due attention given to this humbling scripture, wherein we see the disparity between us and that God with whom we have to do, is so great, that it admits of no comparison, is it possible we can yet think that the works of such nothing

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thing creatures can be something and have in them something excellent to challenge the divine attention, and bring in this glorious being as a debtor? No, all that for which we have any ground to hope God will be propitious, or can ever expect to find favour with him, must be solely of his sovereign grace and mercy in and through his well-beloved son.

That *precious faith*, therefore, by which we lay hold on the blessings and benefits of the Redeemer's death and sufferings is *obtained*, not by works, but of grace; not for the sake of what we have done, but *through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. If the apostle be supposed by the term *righteousness* to mean the justice of God, or the faithfulness of God, in keeping and fulfilling his promises made to the fathers concerning the Messiah, and the blessings to be dispensed through him, it still leads us to conceive of God as the donor of these blessings, and amongst all others that of *faith*, and that such benefits are bestowed solely for the sake of Jesus; such interpretation would perfectly correspond with all scripture declaration and analogy of faith, for whatever favours God at any time gave his people reason to expect from him, were all to be expected in and through a mediator; and to this end served all the sacrifices under the mosaic dispensation, every bleeding victim had respect to Jesus.

If by the term *righteousness* the apostle be supposed to mean the righteousness of Christ, that is, his active and passive obedience, as the original reading may very well bear it, *the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ*, it amounts just to

to the same thing as before ; for that ever God made any promises of life and salvation to sinners was with respect unto Christ, and that he could consistent with his justice confer these blessings, was in consequence, and as the effect of the Redeemer's *righteousness*, that is, his holy life and meritorious sin-atonement death. All the riches of grace and glory are treasured up in Christ, as purchased by his blood, and every gift bestowed on poor sinners is for his sake alone, in him *mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed one another*. God in Christ can be *just, and yet justify the ungodly*. Rom iv. 5.

It appears then that *precious faith* is the gift of God, and that it is given and bestowed only for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered ; therefore our works whatever value we may set upon them, are no procuring cause of salvation, in whole, or in part ; nor can any degree of sorrow for sin, any quantity of tears shed, or any number of prayers preferred, render us more worthy to be the objects of divine compassion, or give us any good foundation that we shall obtain this *precious faith*, as the desert of such sorrow and repentance. Yet here I would beg leave to observe concerning the ordinary state in which a soul finds itself at the time of it's obtaining precious faith, the following things.

1st, No man did ever yet obtain precious faith, that prior to it, had not some sense of the evil of sin, and some degree of sorrow for it. No man, I presume, had ever yet any real sense of the evil of sin, but in consequence of his being quickened by the spirit of God ; and where this is the case, a soul is brought to a sense of feeling, and can-

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cannot possibly taste the bitterness of sin, and now feel himself under the deadly disease thereof, but it creates sorrow, sighing, lamentation and woe; and therefore such state of sorrow naturally and I think necessarily, precedes that state of joy and gladness which can only be experienced as an effect of *faith*.

2d, *The whole*, says our Lord, *need not a physician, but they that are sick*; the gospel is the glad tidings of salvation by Christ, but it is certain none but sinners who want salvation will either desire to credit the report, or pay any regard unto it; the ministers of the gospel may try their utmost skill to set forth the Saviour in the most amiable and desirable character, but none will *credit their report, but those to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed*, Is. liii. 1. We are told *the whole multitude sought to touch Jesus, and that virtue went from him and healed them all*, Luke vi, 19, now this can only be spoken of the multitude of the diseased, for none else had need of healing.

All poor sinners that are quickened by the spirit of God, and convinced of the evil of sin, do not all feel the same compunction of spirit, nor sorrow for it in the same degree; nor does it appear necessary that they should. Some under their first quickening and apprehensions of their state, find their consciences stormed as it were with all the dreadful artillery of Mount Sinai, while others are led on step by step from the most early dawn of spiritual day, to see sin and themselves, and are sweetly allured by the voice of the turtle to cast themselves on Jesus the Saviour.

Why it is that all conceive not alike of themselves under conviction of sin, we may perhaps be-
bet-

better able to say, when we know why the texture and frame of human bodies are not exactly the same; at present it shall suffice me to say, that as men are not all guilty before God of crimes equally offensive, it seems reasonable that the degree of sorrow and compunction for sin, be somewhat proportioned to the greatness of the guilt; if there be any other reason for the different degrees of sorrow under a sense of sin, probably it may be owing to the difference of constitution. I have laid before you these things in order to correct a prevailing mistake, viz. that such a certain degree of sorrow must be experienced, e'er a person could have any ground to expect faith and deliverance; and where such notions as these are propagated and attended to, people are naturally led to place some dependance on their sorrow, as though some proportionate measure of trouble, could purchase some adequate, or proportionable degree of grace.

From all this it appears then, that although in the ordinary way of obtaining *precious faith*, a time of sorrow and heaviness (the effect of the spirit of bondage will generally precede a time of joy and gladness, the effect of the spirit of adoption;) yet this sorrow and trouble has nothing in it of merit to deserve the gift of faith, nor deserves any farther regard than as it appears to be a godly sorrow, and so far may prove the regeneration of the soul. *Precious faith* then, is only to be obtained for the sake of what Jesus has done and suffered, and to seek it, or expect it any other way, or for any other cause or reason besides this, is not only to expect the blessing out of God's appointed way, but is a depreciating of the Redeemer's

deemer's righteousness, and a slight put upon the gospel method of salvation.

What blessing so valuable, that his incomparably great and perfect righteousness could not procure, seeing it was a *righteousness*, fully answering all the demands of the injured or preceptive law; a righteousness spotless as the sun, in respect of its purity, consummate as the adorable Jehovah, that wrought it out, and infinitely glorious in its worth and excellency for poor sinners.

3d, I now proceed, in the third place to speak of the sameness of precious faith in all that do obtain it. There are some things in which faith is not the same, 1st, The faith of Abraham and all the prophets, differed from the faith of apostles and christians, in that the former looked forward to the Messiah to come, and the latter look backward to the Messiah already come; yet the foundation of faith, which is the word of God, and the promise of salvation by Christ, was the same to both. 2d, All men have not the same measure or degree of faith, Abraham was strong in faith, and gave glory to God, Peter was weak in faith when he denied his Lord and master; also the apostle John writes in his epistle, to fathers, young men, and children, and some in every age and place are strong in faith, and live more abundantly the life of faith, while others are weak in the faith, and are tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.

Again 3d, Faith is not the same at all times in the same person; the object and foundation of faith remain immoveable and firm, but by reason of infirmities which cleave to, and are interwoven with our nature here below, our faith yields us
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not all times the same joyous sensations, nor are we so well able to defend ourselves thereby against the enemies of our peace. What a wonderful degree of faith was manifest in Peter, when he said, *Lord bid me come to thee on the water*, but how was it enervated and weakened, when he saw the winds boisterous and the billows foaming.

But *precious faith* is the same in all that obtain it in the following things: 1st, In the quality thereof, the faith of an inspired apostle, or prophet, and the faith of the vilest prostitute, now converted and believing; for whatever it may differ in the quantity and strength, its nature and quality must needs be the same, 1st. Because, it is the effect of the same spirit, and like causes produce like effects; no man ever believed or obtained faith in any degree by the power of his natural abilities, but it is alike in all, the gift of God, produced by that spirit who gives to every man severally as he will. 2d, It is in all that obtain it the purchase of the same blood and righteousness, for as there is but one faith, so this is the faith of the operation of God, and what is bestowed as the effect of the Redeemer's righteousness. 3d, In whatever degree or measure it is possessed, it has been obtained the same way, "through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" for it has been proved that *precious faith* cannot be obtained any other way. 4th, To whomsoever *precious faith* is given, be its quantity or strength what it will, it is intended to answer the same gracious purposes to the possessor; to lead him to Christ, to cast the soul on his merits, to bring a sense of pardon to the conscience, to fill the heart with joy and peace, and
lead

lead the poor needy and naked sinner, to take from the fulness of the Lord Christ whatsoever it can want. Lastly, although all do not possess faith in the same measure, yet all believers possess it as the same precious faith; faith in the smallest measure thereof is as truly precious, as a spark of fire has in it the nature of, and is truly fire. The strong in faith experience more abundant consolation, but the weak in faith have their anchor so securely cast, that they can never suffer wreck. The strong in faith give more glory to God, while they dare to believe the truth of his word and promises, even when sense and reason can yield them no supply; and the weak in faith cannot give God the lye, nor suffer their hope to be entirely cut off.

Thus precious faith appears to have been the same in respect to its quality, in all that have obtained it; but as a greater quantity, or more strong faith at once brings more glory to God, and his interest, and makes the believer's passage through the world more comfortable and pleasant; what reason have we all to use the words of the distressed parent in the gospel; "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief." Mark ix. 24.

2d, *Precious faith* is the same as to its object; viewing nothing in any age or place, but the all perfect righteousness of the son of God, whether it was the ante-incarnation faith, or the post incarnation, its object was the same, viz. the suffering, satisfying Saviour; strong faith and faith most trembling and feeble have still viewed the same object. When the Almighty Lord, passed the sentence of condemnation upon the old serpent the devil, and in the curse of angels, held forth and

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promised a blessing to fallen Adam, it is not unlikely that Adam's heart in that drooping and distressed state, was filled with joy and peace in believing this first gospel sermon that was ever preached. I say its not unlikely that Adam in that blessed hour tasted the preciousness of faith built upon God's gracious word, and looking to the woman's seed the subject of that promise; for it is probable that Adam immediately began as a priest in his family, and the then little church to offer sacrifices unto God, which sacrifices had respect unto Jesus Christ, and as such justified his faith, and gave him to enjoy the comfortable fruits and effects thereof in his soul.

Moses informs us that the Lord God made coats of skins, and cloathed Adam and his wife; as a grant was not yet given to live upon animal food, it is most likely those beasts were slain and offered in sacrifice. But be this as it will, sacrifices were appointed to be offered by God himself, and the apostle to the Hebrews tells us, that *the law*, (meaning the ceremonial) *was a shadow of good things to come*, but the thing shadowed or set forth by these, was the Lord Christ.

God had no pleasure in the blood of a slain beast, save as these creatures had respect unto the lamb of God, and whenever the offerers of these sacrifices, ceased to look through the figure, to the end thereof, he signified his dislike and aversion to these external things: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord, I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of ted beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats," *Is. i. 11.* But when the slain beast was offered in faith,

faith, and the offerer had respect unto Jesus, the Lord also had respect unto him, and to his offering, for Jesu's sake; this was the case with Abel. When the devoted heifer was bound to the horns of the altar, it typified the covenant-engagement, with which the eternal son was bound to do and suffer all the law of God could justly inflict or demand, in order to save his people.

Jesus having *engaged his heart to draw near to God* in the behalf of his people, Jer. xxx, 21, could not go from it, for *in the volume of the book* these things were recorded concerning him. When Abraham lifted up his hand to offer his beloved Isaac in sacrifice to God, he by faith saw the bleeding dying Jesus, pouring out his soul unto death to atone for sin, and in the entangled ram, which he offered in the stead of his son, he saw the resurrection of Jesus in a figure. Heb. xi, 19.

When the wood was laid in order upon the altar, and the victim divided into parts and disposed upon the wood; the believing offerer beheld in faith the Saviour as fastened to the accursed tree; and while the fat and the sweet incense ascended in a flame of fragrancy towards heaven, the offerer was taught that it was a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour; and has it had respect unto Jesus, was acceptable to God. In a word, the lowing bullock and the bleating lamb, spake of Jesus, and in language similar to that of the baptist, said, *behold the lamb of God*. The faith of Adam, and the faith of Paul, with all from east to west, in the infancy of days, and in the age of time, in respect to it's object, is the same; nothing is amiable, nothing desirable, in compari-

son of the Lord Christ in the estimation of faith, whose language by reason of his super-eminent excellency is, none but Christ, none but Christ. Before his incarnation and manifestation to the world, he is called, *the desire of all nations*; after his appearance and the manifestation of himself to the believing soul, all things are esteemed as *dross and dung* in comparison of him.

3d, *Precious faith*, is the same in all ages and places in respect to it's subject, that which it is conversant about; which is the righteousness of the Lord Christ.

What can the believer see in himself or in any other creature in the heavens above or in the earth below, wherein he may take comfort, and on which he may rely, besides the suffering son of God? Faith sees a fullness in him that can silence every cry and satisfy every want; all the patriarchs and prophets looked to this and were saved. Noah's faith was principally employed about the holy and obedient life of Jesus, when he built an ark for the safety of himself and his house, and was made an heir of that *righteousness which is by faith*; and having seen the vengeance of God executed on the world of ungodly sinners, he saw in the sacrifice he offered unto the Lord when he came out of the ark, the sweet savour of the Mediator's death.

The patriarch Jacob, sweetly sung of Christ and his righteousness, a little before his departure from his pilgrimage-state; "the scepter shall not
"depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from be-
"tween his feet untill SHILOH come; and un-
"to him shall the gathering of the people be,
"binding his sole unto the vine, and his asses colt
"unto

“unto the choice vine, he washed his garments
 “in wine, and his cloaths in the blood of the
 “grapes.” Gen. xlix, 10, 11. Simeon rejoiced,
 when the child Jesus was brought into the tem-
 ple, seeing that salvation, Jacob waited for, and
 therefore desired to *depart in peace*. David cele-
 brated the righteousness of the Redeemer, as that
 which was more to be desired, and more to be
 delighted in, than all manner of riches. *My tongue
 shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long, for
 it is very high: Blessed is the people that know the
 joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord in the light of
 thy countenance, in thy name shall they rejoice all the
 day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.*
 Pf. lxxxix, 15, 16, &c. Thus sang the holy men
 of old, and rejoiced in the distant prospect of him
 upon whom help was laid; and blessed Paul, has
 made it manifest in all his writings that his faith
 was solely employed about Jesus and the perfec-
 tion of that righteousness, he had wrought out
 in his holy life, and obedient death.

*I determined, says he, to know nothing among
 you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified; and those
 things that were gain to me, I counted loss for Christ,
 yea dross and dung, in comparison of those things
 that pertain to Jesus. Paul no longer talked about
 his ancestry, and regular life, when he had once
 by faith seen Jesus; Christ was all his theme,
 and his blood and righteousness the crown of his
 rejoicing; God forbid, says he, that I should glory
 save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Gal. vi,
 14. Paul could not bear the thought of being
 found at last in any other state than in this
 righteousness, which is of God by faith. Phillip.
 iii, 9.*

4th, *Precious faith* is the same in all believers, in the ordinary effects it produces. All that obtain it are justified by it, and equally justified, for the smallest measure of precious faith obtains from God in Christ, 1st, A full justification, let his transgressions have been ever so many, or the guilt of them ever so enormous, the *precious blood of Jesus* which precious faith has respect unto, *cleanseth from them all*. Never a sinner yet came to Jesus whose transgressions were too many to be pardoned; sinners are not forgiven, because they seek not mercy according to the appointed means, our Saviour complained when upon earth, *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life; whosoever cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*.

Such as conclude against themselves that their sins are too great to be pardoned, do a double dishonour to him that made them; having injured his *justice* by sinning, they now injure his *mercy* by despairing: This was the case of Cain, when he had cruelly and in a butcherly manner, imbrued his hands in his brother's blood, he cries out in despondency, *my iniquity is greater than can be pardoned*, and hereby sets bounds to infinite mercy, and undervalued the precious blood of the Lord Christ. 2d, *Precious faith* in every degree thereof, obtains justification as a free and sovereign act of mercy in Christ; faith pleads no merit in itself, or in the soul where it is wrought, nor sets any value on any of it's works, but looking to what Jesus has done, stretches forth it's hand to receive as a free benefit bestowed for his sake, a justification or absolution from the guilt of all sin through the redemption that is in him, Rom. iii. 24. 3d, *Precious faith*, obtains from God through

through Christ a final justification ; sins pardoned by the free grace of God in the mediator, will never be retracted, but are cast like a stone into the depth of the sea, and God remembers them no more. Thus faith in whatever degree it is possessed, if it be genuine, the real precious faith we speak of, obtains a justification full, free, and final.

2d, Every degree of precious faith, obtains sanctification ; though not in the same degree or measure thereof ; *justification*, is the same in all that are justified, for a man is either pardoned, or not pardoned ; *sanctification*, may admit of infinite degrees, so that the same measure thereof will scarce be found in any two believers ; yet all that do believe, have received a new and sanctified nature ; holiness is sown but not yet ripe, the child is born, but not grown up ; yet such sanctification in the smallest measure thereof, or in the lowest degree, has glory in it's nature, and is inseparably connected with it ; *for whom he justifies, them he also glorifies.*

3d, As peace with God, access to God, joy in the Holy Ghost, a lively hope, &c. are the ordinary effects of precious faith, so all that partake thereof, find in a degree proportionable to their faith, these inward fruits are produced, and these blessings are obtained. Holy David was comforted, strengthened and supported according to his faith, when he says, " I should utterly have fainted, but that I believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." Ps. 27. And Paul, " we trust in the living God, who hath delivered us, and doth deliver, in

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"whom we trust that he will yet deliver." 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

4th, Where ever *precious faith* is planted, as it is in it's nature a fruit-bearing tree, so it will produce the fruits of piety, justice, mercy, temperance, chastity, &c. in proportion to it's size and strength; for faith worketh by love. Noah being possessed of precious faith, was a man eminent in his generations, *a just man, a perfect man, and he walked with God.*

Paul tells Titus, that *the grace of God taught men to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.*

From what has been delivered we may deduce these inferences.

1st, That salvation belongeth to the Lord; seeing our works have nothing in them to deserve the favour of God, and that precious faith is the gift of God. Whosoever then would lay any claim to salvation otherwise than as the gift of God, robs his maker, makes the blood of Jesus of no avail, and if a miracle of mercy does not prevent it, will eternally ruin his own soul.

2d, Inasmuch as the salvation we speak of, is the effect of the righteousness of Christ, it must needs be most perfect and compleat in every part thereof. As his active and passive obedience, was the obedience of God-Man, there could be in it no imperfection, for as the human nature was hypostatically joined with the divine, and the human body was impregnated with God, every part of his obedience active and passive, had the stamp of

of divinity and perfection upon it; therefore the blessings intended to be purchased by a price so inestimable, must have been secured agreeable to the intention.

3d, If precious faith, for the reasons given, be alike precious to all that obtain it, then the weakest believer has salvation ascertained unto him, as well as the strongest; seeing it is the gift of the same God, the effect of the same spirit, the reward of the same righteousness, is given for the like gracious purposes, and has the same power engaged to preserve and reward it.

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If salvation then be wholly of God, seek it not in yourselves, or in your own performances; this will be to *spend your strength for nought, and your labour for that which satisfieth not*, let God have the glory, bow yourselves before him, and acknowledge that you are poor needy helpless creatures, and are expecting your all from him. I will suppose that you are thoroughly convinced of the evil of sin, that you have thereby abused the goodness of God, have violated his holy law, trampled upon his mercy, and are conscious that you have justly forfeited his favour, and your expectations of happiness, are almost cut off and extinct; yet such conviction and sight of yourselves and sins, have not been attained to by your own prudent attention, and natural light, but have been discovered and laid open in your hearts, by the efficiency of his grace and good spirit, and therefore the glory of this very dawn of salvation is wholly to be ascribed to him. You are by nature dark and blind in your understandings, stubborn

born and refractory in your wills, and your hearts are too proud and haughty to allow the worst of yourselves, and whatever has made a discovery to you of your innate darkness must be a light shining from above, a ray of the uncreated brightness. Why are not all your friends and kindred as much affected under a sense of sin as you are? Are they not sinners also? Yes, verily *all have sinned*. Are you more wise and prudent than they, discovering by your superior sagacity the great evil of sin? This you will scarcely be brought to say. Had you yourselves always the like conception of the evil of sin, or have you only been sinners of late time? This you know is not so. To what then must the present sense of sin and yourselves be ascribed to, if not to the illuminating grace of God now shining into your hearts as a light into a dark cavern? And how under such discovery of sin, are you purposing to procure the salvation you want from the direful effects thereof? You are resolving I make no doubt to correct your former errors and wrong dealings, to amend your lives, and tread the paths of virtue and holiness; and after such laudable resolutions have been carried into practice with all possible care, diligence and circumspection, what do ye hope for? Will future obedience atone for past offences? No, in no wise, for perfect obedience at all times was a debt you owed the author of your being. Can you imagine such obedience as you are purposing to pay, will be perfect and unremitted as the law requires? Sad experience, if you attend to that law, will soon convince you of the folly of such imagination.

Perhaps you are resolving to do something, and
are

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are pleasing yourselves with the thought, that God will do the rest and make up your deficiencies; but pray where is this written? And if this is not God's declared method of salvation, who suggested it? Can you not in this self-contrived plan of salvation see the cloven foot? Is not self and pride at the bottom of all this? What part in this work of your salvation is it that you propose to manage? It is already supposed to be begun, and that by God, otherwise it would never have been set about? It is not unlikely you had stood idle or worse than idle 'till the ninth or eleventh hour, and if the good spirit of God had not inclined your hearts you would have loitered till you had tumbled into hell. And now that God has begun, do you intend by your own power and prudence to carry it on? Verily you will neither find courage nor conduct to withstand the least assault from sin or satan, for "without Christ you can do nothing," John xv, 5, you cannot maintain your ground a day nor an hour. If then your salvation be wholly of God, seek to him alone, take shame and guilt and weakness to yourselves, and give to him the glory.

Again, is salvation only to be obtained through faith in the Lord Christ, then let your works no longer have either name or place in obtaining the blessing; if it was wholly purchased by the blood and righteousness of the Redeemer, then freely acknowledge that he *alone is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.* Rev. v. 12. And if *precious faith* is appointed as the instrument in laying hold on salvation, and this faith itself be obtained as the *gift of God, through the righteousness*

ness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ; then look out of yourselves, take off your attention from your own works, and look to Jesus; hear the word of the Lord, O earth, for faith comes by bearing, and bearing, (all that you can receive any comfort by) is from the word of God.

2d, If the work and undertaking of our Lord Jesus Christ was perfectly finished and compleat, labour to settle in your minds the comfortable and interesting truth; the work finished, what remains to be done? The debt discharged, who can make any further demands? *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died,* the anointed of the father, the Shiloh, the desire of all nations, the woman's-seed who is God over all blessed for ever; *yea rather that has risen again,* and hereby hath given an incontestable proof of the sufficiency of the sacrifice he had offered. As nothing can increase the splendor and light of the sun, or compare with the radiancy and brightness of it's beams; so nothing can add to the consummate work of the holy Jesus, nor any righteousness of ours be compared with the inimitable excellency of his righteousness.

Let your fasted eyes then continually look to this, meditate thereon by night and by day, and let your charmed ears be attentive to his last dying, but triumphant declaration, *it is finished.* Your hearts may often suggest unto you, that this or that good thing will ensure your peace; but if these would either thrust themselves into the place of Jesus and his perfectly finished work, or would offer themselves as auxiliaries in the grand affair of your acceptance with God, you ought to put them away as Jehu did the messengers of Joram king

king of Israel, *What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.*

God hath signified his good pleasure in the compleat work of his son, in that he hath raised him from the dead, and exalted him as the great high-priest of his people to his right-hand in heaven. Set your affections there where Jesus sits, let the anchor of your hope be cast in that which is entered within the vail; let your faith bring to your souls from the fulness of Jesus a rich and plentiful supply; as your good works cannot save you, neither can your involuntary bad works condemn you; "for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit;" Why? Because "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Rom. viii, 1, 3.

You may often find your faith assaulted, and whole troops of distressing and comfort-wasting doubts, attempting to sap your confidence and undermine all your spiritual joys; on one hand a sense of the feebleness of your graces, may disquiet you, and on the other hand, the strength of your yet remaining corruptions, and your many weaknesses and imperfections, may pronounce a sentence of condemnation in your conscience, enforced by the holy law of God.

In such case, run with speed into the garden of Gethsemane, follow Jesus to the cross, view well his sufferings, listen to the language of his vocal blood, and hear him proclaim to the silencing of all your doubts, and the quieting of all your fears, *it is finished.* Let this precious declaration be inscribed on the tables of your hearts, let the sound of

of these words, the last words, the dying words, of your father, brother, friend; O never let their sound depart from your ears. These attended to, these rightly understood, the believer may answer, I will not only say, all the objections of sin and satan, but even of the righteous law, and the inflexible justice of God itself. Live therefore on the fulness there is in Jesus, die to sin, die to self, and live *by faith in the son of God.*

Lastly, Does precious faith lay so fast hold on Christ, that the smallest degree thereof will never quit it's hold, but will finally derive from Jesus, everlasting felicity to the soul? let this animate and encourage the weak believer under all his droopings and despondencies, that all the powers of the lowest hell, shall never be able to tear him from his hold of Jesus; let him comfort himself with the assurance of the Redeemer's care of him, and love to him; if it were possible he could ever lose his hold of Jesus, yet will Jesus never lose his hold of him, for he has loved him with an *everlasting love*, and has discovered his affection for him, and his gracious purposes toward him, in that with *loving kindness he hath drawn him.*

But again, as weak faith often leaves the soul exposed to manifold temptations from the devil, and deprives the heart of that consolation it might otherwise enjoy; labour for an increase of faith; it is the gift of God, in every measure and degree thereof; and as weak faith has access given to God in and through the mediator, ask that more may be given you, *seek that ye may find*; you have now the way open to a tender and indulgent father, who will give all necessary good things

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things to his adopted children in Christ Jesus, and will not withhold his holy spirit in all his quickening and enlivening influences from those that ask him. I add no more, May the God of all grace follow with his blessing, what has been delivered to the ear, and cause it to sink deep into your hearts, issuing in a holy conversation, to the happiness of your souls, and the honour of God in Christ Jesus. *Amen. Amen.*

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S E R M O N X.

REVELATIONS xxii, 17.

Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.

THEY who are sent to preach the everlasting gospel, have full authority given in the discharge of their function, to lay open the whole counsel of God as therein contained, and by using all possible arguments *compel sinners to come in.*

Hence the apostle of the gentiles *knowing the terrors of the Lord*, and how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, labours to *persuade men*, 1 Cor. v, 11. And as an ambassador of Christ, he at other times affectionately intreats and beseeches them *to be reconciled to God*, ver. 20. Ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ, are therefore to unlock the cabinet of jewels, open the rich treasury of God, and bring to light in the publication of the everlasting gospel, the dark counsels, and secret purposes of their great master, which were hidden from the ages foregoing. Paul esteemed it a great honour that the Lord had conferred upon him; in that he had put

put him into the ministry, and commissioned him to preach among the gentiles the *unsearchable riches of Christ*.

The blessed gospel contains a full declaration of the good-will, and gracious purposes of God, towards sinners, in giving his son *for a covenant of the people*, and eternal life in him to all that believe, John iii, 16. These glad tidings of life and salvation, are to be published in all the world, and *preached to every creature*, Mark xvi, 15, and although the bare hearing of the gospel doth not effectually save the hearer, yet the application of the gospel by the irresistible suasion of the holy spirit doth: insomuch that *he who believes, hath everlasting life*, is passed thereunto from a state of spiritual death, and *shall not come into condemnation*, John v. 24. By whatever means the Lord may bring sinners to himself, (for all things are possible to him,) the preaching of the gospel is the most ordinary, *for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard*. Any one sinner that hears the gospel, has as great a right to appropriate the benefits, and blessings holden forth therein, as any other sinner in the world; for although it is a scriptural, and therefore a truth not to be controverted, that Christ suffered and engaged in every other respect, for the elect only; yet, who these are, is a secret hid in the bosom of God, until made manifest by their effectual calling; and one person has equal reason to conclude in favour of himself, as any other, seeing the blessings of the gospel are to be received without any previous worth or merit in the recipient; or

as in the language of my text, *whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*

I purpose to enlarge on these words in order to your profit and edification in the most natural and familiar way, opening,

1st, The blessing invited to, (*viz.*) *the water of life.*

2d, The terms of receiving it, *freely.*

3d, The invited, *whosoever will.*

The chapter from whence is my text, opens with a surprizingly grand and sublime description of the new Jerusalem, with some of those peculiar blessings which render it desirable, and constitute it a land of pure delight. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the lamb. And in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations, &c." I should go on with the description of this unparalleled place; but methinks some of you interrupt me with the enquiry, what must I do to obtain that heavenly country, to be made free of that holy city, and have access to the fruit on that fair tree, and to the crystal streams that water its root?

I must beg your patience and attention a little, 'till I open and unfold more at large the blessing spoken of under the metaphor of the water of life, and in my last head I hope to give you a full, and may the good spirit of God make it a satisfactory

factory answer to your question. The blessing you are invited to, is, the water of life, a beautiful metaphor of the privileges and blessings of the gospel; rich grace, abounding mercy, the peace of God, and joy in the Holy Ghost, &c. The trope is most apt and significant.

1st, What is so desirable as water to a person parched with thirst, and ready to faint with excessive drought? If you should present the choicest food to a person in this strait for water, you would be so far from relieving, that you would heighten and aggravate his distress. Extreme thirst, is perhaps more sharp and painful than the most biting hunger or any other appetite; hence in scripture the greatest blessings are promised to the people of God, under the figure of water, so by the mouth of Is. chap. xli. 17, &c. "When the
 " poor and needy seek water, and there is none,
 " and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord
 " will hear them, I the God of Israel will not
 " forsake them; I will open rivers in high places,
 " and fountains in the midst of the valleys, I
 " will make the wilderness a pool of water, and
 " the dry land springs of water." And in chap. xxxv. 6, 7. "In the wilderness shall waters break
 " out, and streams in the desert, and the parched
 " ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land
 " springs of water." Now as water is of such excellent use for allaying thirst, and satisfying the desires of one that is parched with drought, so it is a lively emblem of that sovereign mercy, which alone can satisfy a sinner who sees and feels his lost estate and condition by sin. So long as persons continue in their state of unregeneracy, and the God of this world still draws a veil over their

hearts, notwithstanding their condition is really deplorable, they being in a damnable state; and they upon some occasions may drop a word or two by way of acknowledgment that they are sinners, &c.

Yet does not the evil of sin appear in that hideous sort, nor do they see their danger in a manner so alarming to their consciences, or terrifying to their souls, as when by the agency of the blessed spirit, their souls are brought to a sense of feeling, their ears unstopped to hear the thunder from Sinai, and their eyes are opened to see the damning nature of sin, the purity and perfection of the law of God, together with their own depraved nature, and the desperate wickedness of the heart. This is a sight will make the stoutest rebel tremble, and the most stubborn sinner that ever the sun beheld will be unable to look up under such a discovery.

While a sinner lies under the apparent frowns of his offended maker, and the bitter accusings of a guilty conscience, his state seems altogether insupportable, he groans under what he feels, but is ready to faint under what he fears; it is in such case as this that the words of the wise man are experienced, *the spirit of a man will sustain his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear*, Prov. xviii. 14.

David seems to have felt somewhat of the scorching nature of the Almighty's anger, when he says, *day and night thy hand was heavy upon me, my moisture is turned into the drought of summer*, Ps. xxxii. 4. And Job in the bitterness of his complaint says, *the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit*,
Job

Job vi. 4. Under such inward breakings of spirit, and grievous woundings of heart as these, what a perfect resemblance there is to a person whose spirit fainteth, and whose tongue cleaveth to the roof of his mouth with extreme thirst; save that the former is more excruciating and distressful, as the pain felt, and evil feared, are more interesting and important than in the latter. And as in the case of the latter, nothing is so desirable as water, so in the former, nothing can give ease or satisfy, but that mercy, which is signified thereby. It is impossible to enrich that soul with all the wealth of India that is reduced to a sense of its own poverty by the spirit of God; the earnest cry, and very breathing of such a soul is, *O satisfy me with thy mercy, and that soon*, Ps. xc. 14. Would you propose to exalt him to honour, he has no inclination, seeing that he is had in disgrace before that God, whom now to be reconciled to, he would be content to be any thing, or suffer any thing; his choice is now *rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin*, and like Moses, *he esteems the reproach of Christ greater riches, than the treasures of Egypt*, Heb. xi. 26. Nothing but Christ can satisfy a person in this condition, for says he, "What is all the world to me, seeing it cannot relieve the distresses of my wounded conscience, nor supply me with any medicine that may be a cordial to my diseased soul; if the whole world was in my own possession, and it were possible I could convert it to solid gold, riches so immense would be to me as nothing, while my soul is racked with the bitter remembrance of my sins, and I sicken every moment under the

“terrible apprehensions of the wrath of my offended maker.” Now my text contains an invitation to that mercy such a sinner wants under the metaphor of water, and says, *whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*

2d, What is there among all the blessings of common life of such universal utility as water? This is particularly useful for cleansing and purifying our cloaths, vessels, &c. And very fitly sets forth unto us the necessity of spiritual water, if I may so say, to cleanse and purify our souls from their native defilement and pollution.

The spirit of God in his sanctifying influences upon the hearts of God’s people, is compared to water, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, &c.* Water can make clean, and take the spots out of our sullied garments, but the spirit of God is of more excellent use, in taking away from us the filthy rags of our own righteousness, and preparing and putting on us through faith in Jesus, a robe perfectly pure and spotless, and hereby rendering a poor sinner loathsome in himself, altogether comely in the eyes of unspotted purity, through the comeliness of this robe put upon him.

Water is of excellent use for bathing, and washing away the filth of the flesh, &c. but the spirit of God represented hereby, cleanses the corrupt nature, and purifies the soul defiled by sin; hence believers are exhorted *through the spirit, to mortify the deeds of the body*, Rom. viii. 13. By the gracious operations of the spirit, the heart is weaned from the love of the world, convinced of the vanity, and emptiness of all created things; is led to see the amiableness of Jesus,
and

and the excellency of his mediatorial undertaking for poor sinners. By the workings of the spirit, man's pride is humbled, the glory of the Redeemer is exalted, earth sinks and heaven together with the things of God rise higher and higher in the esteem of the believer.

John saw in his vision a river clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God, and the lamb; this river therefore represented the holy spirit, the third person in the adorable trinity, who proceeds from the father, and the son, and who together with the father and the son, is one God in the adorable unity. This river was a pure river, and therefore figured out the spirit of God who is a holy spirit in his own nature, and carries on a holy work in the hearts of believers, and so purifies their souls by his gracious influences.

3d, The water in my text is, by way of peculiar eminence called *the water of life*, and what can better set forth unto us the favour of God concerning which it is said in the book of Psalms, *life is enjoyed therein*, Pf. xxx. 5. That rich grace, that abundant mercy, which the gospel discovers, and holds forth to the sons of men, and which is appropriated by the believer, is the porch that leads into the palace of the king of kings, the commencement of eternal felicity, and the gracious dawning of eternal day in the soul. This is the water Jesus gives, which *whosoever drinks, shall thirst no more, but it shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life*, John iv. 13, 14. He who drinks of this water, finds his soul quickened, and raised up from a death in trespasses and sins, to newness of life; finds the troubles of his heart assuaged, his soul healed,
and

and his wounds tenderly bound up; he is filled with joy, and peace in believing, and the love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy-Ghost given unto him. Thus *he that believes*, or in other words, drinks of this living water, *hath everlasting life*, John iii. 36, the incorruptible seed is sown in his heart *which liveth, and abideth for ever*.

Again, this water in my text, is called the water of life, with much propriety, seeing he that drinks it has not only eternal life begun, but insured unto him in the promises of the gospel. Gospel-blessings are not precarious and uncertain things which may or may not be received on the performance, or non performance of some certain conditions to be performed by us, but are in Christ Jesus, yea and amen, to every one to whom it is given to believe on the Saviour of sinners. Salvation is not only made possible to all that will believe, but certain to all that shall *believe through the operation of the spirit of God*, Coloss. ii. 12. Glory is begun in grace, in the heart of every believer, and although his faith be weak as the bruised reed, his love dim and dying as the smoaking flax, in a word, although grace be in him small as a grain of mustard-seed, yet shall it grow up under the droppings of the sanctuary under the prolific life-nourishing wings of the heavenly dove, to a tree in glory; for the believer being *planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of the house of our God, and bring forth fruit in old age*. Ps. xcii. 13, 14.

These are the blessings holden forth in my text, under the metaphor of water, *the water of life*; blessings truly valuable, or rather so transcendent-
ly

ly great that they may be called invaluable, and yet, O marvellous grace! Goodness beyond conception great! You are invited whoever will to take these blessings freely; *whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.* This leads to the second point proposed, namely, the terms on which you are invited to take the *water of life*, and my text says *freely*.

The greek word, either signifies evil done to any person without cause, and in this sense it is used, John xv. 25, answering to the Hebrew (*bhinnam*.) Ps. xxxv. 19, or, 2d. to confer and bestow benefits gratis, that is without desert, and in this the same word is used, Matt. x. 8, *freely ye have received, freely give*; and in this sense also it is to be taken in the passage before us. Nothing is required from you as a previous qualification, or that may give you some rightful claim to the donation; but you are invited to take it freely, past merit, and present worth both apart. Nor should we conceive because invited to partake of the favours of heaven, that there is in us something amiable in the eyes of infinite purity, and that our persons and performances have any thing that is truly pleasing to God, or may deserve these favours; but on the contrary, God invites to these favours, that his grace may be magnified in the salvation of sinners, and by partaking hereof, they may become amiable and acceptable. The law of God makes large demands on the sons of men, and in unabating severity says to every sinner, pay me that thou owest; but the gospel respects our insolvent state, and directs to Christ the surety.

The gospel therefore is glad tidings indeed, seeing

seeing it requires not that we have not, but confers what we want; the law amazes and terrifies the soul, the gospel cheers it; the law in relentless rigour wounds, the gospel in tender pity heals; the law kills, but the blessed gospel quickens to immortal life. If any will insist on the necessity of our doing something in order to receive the blessings of the gospel; such persons are yet under the law as much as the church of Galatia, which urged circumcision as necessary in order to receive gospel salvation; and notwithstanding they call themselves by the name of Christ, yet possess too much of the spirit of the pharisees whom Christ so often and sharply reprov'd. If sinners could possibly do any works of righteousness for which they might deserve grace or glory, these consequences and such like would follow, which are absurd, and unscriptural.

First, Man could not be dead in trespasses and sins, seeing to work in any wise is peculiar to the living, not the dead; and I think, to suppose a sinner dead to God, to be capable of performing any holy, lively services to God, is equally absurd, as to suppose a dead man to be capable of performing in any wise the functions of the living. Besides, whatever degree of power the unconverted man may be supposed to be possess of, will avail nothing so long as he wants a *will* to exercise and put forth that power, which *will* we are told is wanting in all men in a state of unregeneracy, for *the carnal mind is enmity against God*, Rom. viii. 7, and nothing less than omnipotence can conquer the stubbornness of the *will*, and sweetly constrain it to close in with the things of God, Ps. cx. 3. It follows therefore, that as
man

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man is thus fallen and depraved, had there been any part of his salvation left unfinished, had any thing been required from him in order to obtain favour with God, the whole human race, (for all have sinned and sunk into the same state of spiritual death and depravity,) must have perished eternally. Thanks be to God then for free grace, and free, yet full salvation, *whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*

2d, If sinners must necessarily do something as from themselves in order to obtain salvation, then the blessing could not be entirely a gift; nor could that salvation be solely of grace, as by the apostle Paul it is affirmed to be. Rom. iv. 4. *to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace but of debt*; and whatever part the creature performs in this great work, without doubt he merits a proportionable degree of the glory and honour that is due to the Saviour, and therefore in some sort has a right, if I may use the phrase to share stakes with the Lord Christ; which is such a degree of arrogancy as I think the proudest pharisee must blush to stand chargeable withal. John in his apocalyptic trance, saw and heard the blessed spirits above, in verse and chorus celebrating his name who was dead and is alive; and they sung and said, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and
"to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain,
"and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,
"out of every kindred, and tongue, and people,
"and nation; and ten thousand times ten thousand, lift up their voices and said, worthy is
"the lamb that was slain, to receive power, and
"riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour,
"and glory, and blessing; and every creature
"joined

“joined the heavenly anthem, saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb for ever and ever.” Rev. v. 9, 12, 13. We see therefore in heaven, Jesus has no competitor, no rival in his praise, for there was no adjutor in the work, his own arm brought salvation to poor sinners, and he bestows the blessing freely, *whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*

Man as a fallen creature is proud and peevish; *proud*, and therefore would do something by way of sacrificing to his own net, and burning incense to his own drag; *peevish*, and therefore maligns and oppugns whatever thwarts, or contradicts his own selfish designs; hence *the preaching of Christ crucified became to the jews a stumbling block; and to the greeks foolishness*, 1 Cor. i. 23. Had righteousness been attainable by works, the jews no doubt had obtained it, who sought it in this way; yet this is given as a reason by the apostle why they did not obtain it; *because they sought it not by faith, but by the works of the law*, for they stumbled at that stumbling stone, namely Christ, who is a rock of offence to the pride and haughtiness of unregenerate sinners, but a rock of salvation to all who believe. If man is required to do something in order to his acceptance with God, salvation is not by grace, nor will the pride of man disclaim some part in the glory; for although it be granted that grace first moves upon the heart of man in order to quicken, enlighten, and dispose the soul, to close in with the offers of grace, and salvation; yet if grace barely proposes, and does not effectually incline the will by

by a power which lapsed, and depraved nature cannot resist, but leaves an unregenerate sinner, to chuse or refuse, to reject, or receive, and improve that grace to his own salvation; I think the following things are undeniably clear.

1st, That as all men are fallen creatures, and are by nature so far from being disposed to seek God, and obey him, that until renewed by grace, they hate subjection, to his holy law; so none of all flesh would receive and improve that offered grace, and consequently none could be saved. Yet this doctrine, dreadful and discouraging as it is, is the doctrine of most of our modern divines; broached and defended first by Arminius in his day, and preached and insisted on in this, by too many of those who in other respects, hold the truth as it is in Jesus, and manifest a great zeal for the cause of God. 2d. That whosoever (directed by such pretended prudence) improves that grace which others reject and disregard, may not only with the words, but in the very spirit and temper of the Pharisee draw near to God, and with a supercilious look, and a contemptuous sneer, claim preference to those he despises.

But how far this is agreeable to the spirit of the gospel, the passage here alluded to will declare; *he that humbleth himself shall be exalted; but he that exalteth himself shall be abased.* 3d, The doctrine delivered by the apostle Paul, is just the reverse of that insisted on by the Arminians, and seems purely and purposely calculated to humble the pride of man, and ascribe salvation wholly to God in Christ Jesus.

“The gifts and calling of God are without repentance,” Rom. xi. 29. “It is not of him that

“that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of
 “God that sheweth mercy.” ch. ix. 16. And
 in order to hide pride from man, and leave sal-
 vation wholly in the hands of God, the same wri-
 ter proves by the most cogent and convincing ar-
 guments, that all men are by sin, sunk under a
 degree of condemnation proportioned to their
 sins, having “all sinned (none excepted) and
 “come short of the glory of God,” ch. iii. 23;
 and that there is but one possible way of emerg-
 ing from this state of guilt, which is, by a free,
 that is, an undeserved justification, *being justified
 freely*, not for any merit in man, but solely for
 the sake of Christ, “through the redemption that
 “is in Christ Jesus, ver. 24.

Seeing therefore the blessings of grace and glory,
 under the metaphor of living water, are preach-
 ed unto sinners as the free gift of God, well may
 the gospel be said to be good tidings of great joy;
*how beautiful upon the mountains, O Zion, are
 their feet who thus publish peace!* Poor distressed
 souls who are ready to sink under the bur-
 den of your sin, and to faint away with the sore
 disease of a depraved nature; here is a support
 and stay for you to rely upon; Jesus is a rock,
 “a tried stone, a sure foundation, he that be-
 “lieves in him shall not be ashamed,” Is. xxviii,
 16. Rom. ix, 33. Gospel-blessings are a cor-
 dial, Christ crucified believed in, makes glad the
 heart, cheers the soul, and exhilarates all the
 drooping faculties of the distressed mind.

You are not called upon to bring a price in
 your hand, but to receive life and salvation, grace
 and glory, gratis; *buy wine and milk without money
 and without price*, says the Holy Ghost by Isaiah
 the

the prophet, and in similar language by the apostle John, *Whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.* By this marvellous and astonishing method of dispensing salvation, all boasting is excluded, all receive grace and glory on the same terms, *freely*; sinners of five hundred, and sinners of fifty pence; a self-righteous soul, and a self-condemned Magdalene, having nothing, both come short of the glory of God, receive a free pardon in Christ the Lord. It is in this way that a just and righteous God can absolve and accept to favour a guilty sinner, can be just, yet *justify the ungodly*; by this infinitely wise and gracious expedient, “mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.” Pf. lxxxv, 10. In this way of salvation, none need despair of obtaining mercy, the most abandoned profligate may yet obtain favour; mercy is yet for him on equal terms with any other person in the world; none are excluded from gospel- blessings, none shut out from sharing in the salutary effects of the mediator’s death, but such as either like some of the Jews, *reject the counsel of God*, and neglect this great salvation, or like wretched Cain limit the mercies of God, and conclude their iniquities too great for the merits of Christ to atone, or the rich and abounding mercy of God to pardon.

I could be content to pursue this point much farther, and expatiate much more largely on so charming, so interesting a theme; but am restrained partly by the narrow limits of time assigned to discourses of this nature, and partly by a supposed impatience amongst many of you, to know how far you are interested in these blessings,
and

and whether it is probable you may partake in them. I shall therefore proceed to the third and last thing intended, which is to shew who are invited to *take the water of life freely*; and the language of my text is; *whosoever will*.

That there is an ordination to everlasting life, and an election to salvation by grace, as the eternal and unalterable counsel of God, holden forth in the scriptures of truth, is incontestably clear to all who read them with an unbiaſſed mind; and ſingular attention; yet ſuch ſecret counſel concerns not you in the caſe before us; and that for this reaſon, becauſe it is ſecret; God has been pleaſed to reveal all that is neceſſary for us to know, and theſe revealed truths “belong to us” and to our children,” Deut. xxix, 29.

It is a prevailing error amongſt many who ſignify a deſire for ſalvation, that they invert the order of things, begin where they ſhould leave off, ſeek firſt to know the deep things of God, and neglect to ſearch into the hidden myſtery of iniquity in their own hearts; they ſeem very deſirous to know their election; and that they themſelves are perſonally choſen of God to ſalvation, without ever enquiring into the truth and certainty of their calling; whereas the ſcripture order is, to make ſure our calling firſt, 2 Pet. i. 10, and if this be firm, it becomes the ſtrongest proof of election; *for whom he called, them he alſo juſtified, and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified*, Rom. viii, 30.

Now becauſe my text ſays, *whoſoever will, may take of this water of life*, I’ll ſuppoſe, (which alſo I hope is really the caſe,) that not a few who hear me this day, are not only willing, but deſirous

to partake of the blessings here spoken of; methinks I hear you say almost in the language of Jesse's royal son, *Oh that one would give me to drink of the water of life*, 2 Sam. xxiii, 15. Yet your spirits fail with fearful misgivings of heart, and you are overwhelmed with a deep consciousness of your unworthiness, and cannot but doubt of your acceptance with God. I am persuaded you will hear me then a few minutes with patience, let before you some encouragements to claim as your right, the mercies of God in Christ Jesus; and to take with a believing appropriation, *the water of life freely*; and may the good spirit of God grant you to hear with pleasure and profit also.

1st, If to persons in apparent danger there appears but a possibility of deliverance, it affords a proportionable degree of hope and comfort; now it is certain let your case be wretched and deplorable as it will, deliverance is not impossible, for *all things are possible with God*. The blessed gospel is to be preached to every creature, to all men as sinners, making no difference in the free declarations of mercy and grace in Christ Jesus, to all who hear it; nor are it's blessings withholden from any who are willing to receive them. Could nothing more be offered by way of encouragement, than a bare possibility of obtaining salvation, methinks it should not only alleviate your trouble by saving you from the whirlpool of despondency, but also animate and rouse you to put in practice all probable means to obtain it. See what effect the bare possibility of preservation had upon the four lepers at the gate of Samaria. Benhadad the king of Asyria had gathered together all the host

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of

of his mighty men, and laid siege to the city of Samaria; he had so blocked up all the passages, and so effectually prevented all ingress, or egress, that the besieged were reduced to the greatest scarcity, an asses head being sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces. Now in this straits of the siege there were four lepers, who probably by reason of the loathsomeness of their disease had been shut out from the city, and now sat at the gate, in order to receive something for subsistence, from those that went in and out of the city; these seeing, and considering the present state of affairs, and what would in all likelihood be the consequence thereof in respect to themselves, began to reason on this wise one with another, "Why sit we here untill we die? If we say we will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also;" the means of our subsistence being entirely cut off. "Now therefore come and let us fall unto the host of the Assyrians; if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die," 2 Kings vii. 3, 4. Pursuant to this resolution, we are told in the following verses, they proceeded, and met with success beyond their expectation or wishes. Go ye, ye poor desponding sinners, and do likewise. How much is your case like theirs; in your sins and blood you cannot live; should you persist in former practices, and pursue a shadow of happiness in created good, your souls must utterly starve; but if you cast yourselves upon God, there is at least a possibility, a peradventure, that

God

God will give you repentance unto life: 2 Tim. ii, 25.

But I go on to shew, 2d, that there is not only a *possibility* of your being accepted, but also a *probability*; for 1st, All real conviction of sin is effected by the spirit of God; and although sin is odious in its aspect, and destructive in its nature, yet nothing of this is either suspected, felt, or feared, until the Holy Ghost powerfully operates upon the soul, in order to discover this; nothing appears amiable in the person of the Redeemer, nor desirable in his blessed gospel, until a light from above dispels the gloom, and scatters the darkness from the mind; for 'till this be done "The God of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel of Jesus Christ should shine into their hearts." 2 Cor. iv. 4. Now wheresoever therefore, the spirit of God has wrought a real conviction of sin, and a sincere desire after holiness; such work is an indication of God's gracious purposes toward that soul; and that the foundation laid in self-abasement, and humiliation shall rise into a glorious edifice, *whose top-stone shall be brought forth with shoutings, grace, grace, unto it.*

2d, It must needs afford a good foundation for hope of acceptance, when a soul sees its own nakedness, pollution, and defilement, and therefore cannot but abhor itself, and disclaim all pretensions to merit; to hear that this has been the ordinary method of God's dealing with poor sinners whom in rich mercy he was minded to bring unto himself. For so the Lord is said to have dealt with Israel; their backs were bowed down with sore bondage, before their enlargement; they

were much distressed in the wilderness before they were put into possession of the good land. David records their distresses and deliverances in such strains as these; "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way, they found no city to dwell in, hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them, then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distresses, &c. Again, he brought down their heart with labour, they fell down and there was none to help; then they cried unto the Lord, and he saved them out of their distresses, &c." Ps. cvii. 4, 5, 12, 13. And that man's extremity should be God's opportunity of helping, we are given to understand by Abraham, when he called the name of the place on mount Moriah, where God interposed in the deathful purpose, *Jehovah jireh*, that is to say, *the Lord, Jehovah*, will appear to relieve his servants in the distressing hour.

The wife of Manoah reasoned well, when she said to her doubting husband, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have dealt with us so and so, &c." Jud. xiii, 23. And we are taught by the prophet Hosea to console ourselves with this, that "If the Lord hath torn he will heal us, if he hath smitten, he will bind us up, &c." ch. vi. 1. From all which things we may well infer, that there is somewhat more than even a probability that sinners conscious of sin, and willing to be saved in a gospel-way, shall find favour.

3d, The spirit of bondage ordinarily, and somewhat necessarily precedes the spirit of adoption; not that a sinner when convinced of sin and wounded

wounded in spirit, contracts thereby any greater worthiness before God, nor can the deepest humiliation, or the most unfeigned or sincere repentance, extenuate in any measure the guilt of those sins repented of; but hereby the sinner, 1st, Is led to set a greater value on the blessing of pardon, Christ becomes a desirable Saviour unto him, and his blood and righteousness are truly precious in his esteem. 2d, he is brought to see the real evil of sin, and his soul having been pierced as it were through and through with it's envenomed darts, the smartings of his wounds are not soon forgotten; so that afterwards when solicited to sin, he remembers the gall and the wormwood, and his soul is humbled and restrained. 3d. By being brought so low in his own apprehensions, and as it seemed, so near to the gates of hell, he cannot but look upon his deliverance as the greater, and love his great deliverer the more, by how much the greater danger he has delivered him from. Holy David purposes to praise God, and to glorify his name for evermore, because, says he, *thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell*, Ps. lxxxvi, 13. And the common motive of every believer's love to God, as taken notice of by the apostle John, is, *because he first loved us*.

But I proceed, 3dly, What greater encouragement can possibly be given, or can poor sinners wish, than to be told that to save such, was the very thing for which Christ came into the world; to this end he was born, and for this he gave up himself a sacrifice and oblation on the cross, that being made a curse for sinners, they believing in him should be delivered from under the curse

and wrath due to them because of sin. His name JESUS, was significant of his office, a Saviour, and his errand was *to save his people from their sins*. Many who understood not sufficiently the purpose and spirit of the Lord Christ, and whose minds were blinded by pride and self-conceit, were prejudiced against Jesus, because he associated too much as they supposed with publicans and sinners; but he frequently in order to check their pride, and reprove their ignorance, gave them to understand that the persons whom they despised, and made no account of, were the very persons he had to do with; *which of you*, said he, *having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and goeth after that which is gone astray, and when he hath found it he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing*, Luke xvi. 4, 5.

The self-righteous in every age have made little account of Jesus and his righteousness, too much valuing their own, and until convinced of their innate depravity, and the insufficiency of their own doings, Jesus the Saviour has been preached to them in vain; therefore said our Lord *the whole*, that is they who like Saul of Tarsus think themselves to be whole, *need not a physician*. But sinners taught of God, having every refuge of lies swept away, and the foundation of every false support torn from under them, see that none but Christ can save them, that without the imputation of his blood and righteousness they are ruined, undone, damned. To these, how precious is Christ! *His very name is like ointment poured forth*, the feet of those who publish his gospel *are beautiful upon the mountains*, and his blood shed on mount

Calvary is as a healing balm to their wounded consciences.

Sinners, your doubts of acceptance have no sound root, nor have your fears any good foundation; should satan suggest the multitude of your sins with all their aggravations, the gospel points you to the blood of Jesus, *it is Christ that died*; should he set before you your defilement by sin, and your unworthiness of the divine favours, the gospel tolerates you to appropriate the perfect righteousness of Christ, saying, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*, and to appear before God as it were in the goodly raiment of your elder brother.

Should your own hearts misgive you, and lead you to doubt of acceptance with Christ, you can produce no proof from the word of God, or the experience of any person in the world, in any age thereof, that ever came to Christ for salvation, and was rejected. The case of the canaanitish woman seems to have been recorded as a special instance of the kindness and compassion of the son of God, and with a particular view to encourage poor needy sinners to cry unto him without weariness or fainting. "Have mercy on me, she cries, O Lord
" thou son of David, my daughter is grievously
" vexed with a devil; but he answered her not
" a word; then his disciples intreat for her, but
" he answered and said, I am not sent, but un-
" to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The woman, like Jacob, resolving to take no denial,
" came and worshipped him, saying, Lord help
" me;" a petition presented with so much humility, and with such an entire dependance, will certainly be attended to; but oh, heart-breaking
answer,

answer, "he said, it is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." Surely all these insinuations of unwillingness to help, at least thrown together, will amount to an absolute denial; no, she as a pattern for penitent souls, acknowledges her worthlessness, and will be content to be reputed a dog, so she may but be favoured with the dog's portion; "truth Lord," she said, it is not meet to give the children's meat to dogs, "yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table," let this be my portion; "then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Math. xxv, 22, &c.

You see my dear hearers from this passage viewed at large, what a tender-hearted Saviour there is, who only withholds his kindness from poor sinners untill they be truly humbled in their own eyes, and taught to set a due value of the rich grace and mercy of God our Saviour; and whenever this is done, you have his word and promise engaged that he will not send you away empty.

And this shall lead me to the last encouragement I intend in this to set before you, which is, 4thly, Scripture invitations and promises, of which there are not a few; and let it here be observed, and in citing these let it be attended to, that the invitations and promises recorded in the scriptures, are the *invitations* of God, and therefore sincere; for as he cannot be deceived, neither can he deceive his creatures, being a God of truth and in whom there is no unrighteousness: and the *promises* of God, *with whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning*; all whose promises being in Christ Jesus, all respecting Je-
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hus, *are yea and amen.* And let it be furthermore observed, that as the gospel is to be preached to every creature, and the promises of life and salvation are holden forth therein, to all that come to Christ in a way of believing; so ye are the very persons to whom such blessings belong, seeing ye are not only willing, but desirous to come unto him, from a sense of your sin, and a persuasion of his sufficiency to save.

Hear then the words as they issued from his heart full of compassion, and fell from his lips like the dew of heaven on the tender grass; *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.* Is not this somewhat your state? Hath not the spirit of truth emptied you of all self-dependance, and discovered your impoverished condition to you? Is it not a sense of this that causes you to "mourn like a dove, and to chatter like a crane or a swallow?" *Is. xxxviii, 14.* *Blessed are they that mourn, saith the Lord, for they shall be comforted.* Let these words of the living God be an encouragement then for you to come; say unto him, "Lord I am poor, do thou enrich me with mercy and grace, O satisfy me early that I may rejoice and be glad all my days; bid me put off my sackcloth, and do thou gird me with gladness, thou knowest how I mourn in my prayer and am vexed, O do thou comfort me according to thy word; I am athirst, Lord give me the water of life." Now the answer to your prayer is, *come and take of the water of life freely.*

Precious invitation, plead nothing in excuse but come; what proof do you give of your sincerity in professing a desire to take of this water,
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if, when invited by the Lord himself, the great master of the feast, ye yet refuse to come? Take heed lest he should resolve in wrath, that such doubtful, distrusting, desponding creatures shall never taste of this *living water*.

Are not you complaining of the burden of sin, and want to be delivered from it? *Come unto me*, saith the compassionate Redeemer, *and I will give you rest*. Math. xi, 28. Say you, but I am so sensible of my sin, and utter unworthiness, that I fear should I venture, it would be a kind of presumption, and I should be rejected to my greater confusion. I answer, to come uninvited (considering what you are) might be esteemed presumption, but not to come when invited, may be looked on as a contempt and undervaluing the blessings of the gospel. And as to your fear of being rejected, I would say, 1st, Should it be so, and what you fear befall you, such rejection will but leave you where you are, supposing you to be without Christ, for there is not salvation in any other; but 2d, This, whatever an unbelieving heart and a wily enemy may suggest, is altogether impossible; seeing such treatment could neither consist with the sincerity, nor faithfulness of God. *Whosoever*, says our Lord, *cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*. John vi, 37, and declares by the mouth of his prophet, that he has a special regard for distressed sinners, saying, *to this man will I look that is of an humble, and contrite spirit, and trembles at my word*. Is. lxvi, 2.

From what has been said it appears, that there is balm in Gilead, and a physician able to heal; none can fail of salvation who seek it through Jesus; but how is it possible for those to escape
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the damnation of hell who *neglect it*? Heb. iii. 9. What will you say in excuse for the neglect and abuse of such mercies ye careless ones? Will you plead at the bar of God the many calls you had to attend the world, and your multiplied concerns in it? How justly may the righteous judge of all the earth retort the plea for passing the irrevocable sentence of condemnation upon you; seeing you had so many, such frequent, and loud calls from God to attend to the one thing needful, and concerns of infinite importance lay neglected under your hands. May it not be expected that he will address you from the bar, in the words his ministers have often sounded from the pulpit, "I called, and ye refused, I stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof, therefore, I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh." Prov. i. 24, 25, &c.

Will you plead the multitude or magnitude of your sins, by reason of which, you were afraid to venture? This will be to fly as it were in the face of your judge, set limits to the mercy of God, and depreciate the value of the blood of Christ; in so doing you will openly declare yourselves to have been unbelievers, and instead of extenuating, abundantly aggravate the guilt of your sins. In a word, if you take not the water of life as it is now freely holden forth unto you in the blessed gospel, and on gospel terms, you will hereafter like Dives in hell beg a drop of it in vain to cool your scorching tongues. I have now therefore only to say to you, in the language of inspiration, *now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation;*

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whoſoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.

A word to you who have drank of this living water, and I conclude. Is it poſſible that ye can yet thirſt after the viſionary happineſs this world boaiſts of, and deludes it's followers with? No, you are convinced that all ſublunary good is comparatively not worth a wiſh; what the world calls pleaſure, you have now no reliſh for, they are too ſcanty to ſatiſfy the large deſires of your capacious ſouls, and too ſhort-lived to perpetuate the felicity you are in the purſuit of. If ye are what you profeſs to be, *ye are dead to the world, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God.* Coloff. iii. 1, 2, &c.

What can you do leſs than in return for ſuch favours, to *preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is your reaſonable ſervice,* Rom. xii. 1. Ye are not your own, but *are bought with a price*; the living water you have drank was the price of blood, and was beſtowed upon you freely; therefore publiſh abroad with lip and life the free goodneſs of the ſoverrign, diſtinguiſhing grace of that God who has called you out of darkneſs into his marvellous light. Sing and ſay, with the ſweet-finger of Iſrael, partakers of like favours, influenced by ſimilar motives *ſalvation belongeth to the Lord,* Pf. iii. 8. And that you are made partakers of it, further ſing and ſay, *not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praiſe for ever and ever.* Amen.

S E R M O N XI.

GENESIS xxv. 22.

If it be so, why am I thus?

TH E S E are the words of Rebekah the mother of Jacob and Esau, and the wife of Isaac. We are informed in the preceding verse, that Rebekah was barren, and Isaac intreated the Lord for her, that is, because of her barrenness, and the Lord was intreated, that is, the Lord heard and answered Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived. Glorious encouragement this for believers; what can ye want that your God has not in store to give? "Lo, children and the fruit of the womb are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord." Ps. cxxvii. 3, the blessings of corn, of wine, and oil, are in his hands to give, *for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof*, and no good thing, profitable for life and godliness will be withhold from them that walk uprightly, Ps. lxxxiv. 11. But we are told verse 24, *there were twins in her womb*, and when

when the children struggled within her, she came to enquire of the Lord, and she said, *if it be so, why am I thus?* I doubt not but Rebekah had all the signs of pregnancy, and yet she was slow to believe what the Lord had done for her in answer to her husband's prayer; such is the natural hardness of our hearts, that God himself can scarce be credited by us without a miracle; *except said our Lord ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe.* However the Lord was pleased to resolve her doubts in ver. 23, and said unto her, two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger." It seems that Isaac and his wife were both praying persons; when they want a blessing they ask it of God, and when in doubt they come to the fountain of wisdom, for an explication. Brethren this is just what we should always do; we are many of us so poor, because we do not come to Christ that we might *buy gold and be rich.* Rev. iii. 18; and so very ignorant of our state and condition, because we ask *not wisdom of God who gives liberally to all men and upbraids not.* James i. 5. The language of my text is so much the language of believers, when under sharp and bitter conflicts of soul, by reason either of some violent outbreakings of corruption, or some sensible defection in their graces; that in order to relieve their distresses, and (if my God shall be so pleased to enable a poor unworthy creature,) to frame an answer to the enquiry in my text, I have made choice of it, for the subject of this discourse.

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Therefore in treating of these words, I shall enquire

1st. Why a believer may be led to doubt the truth of his conversion.

2d. Offer some considerations, to remove them, and settle his mind in peace.

3d. Give some directions to the believer to maintain his ground in his warfare.

If it be so, why am I thus? If I am indeed born of the spirit, renewed in the powers of my soul; passed from death unto life, and created anew in Christ Jesus; why am I yet so weak and feeble in all the efforts of grace, why so cold in my affections, why does not my heart burn with love, and my joys abound; why do I feel such a perpetual struggle in my mind, while a formidable army of natural corruptions and sensual inclinations seems ready like a huge and sweeping torrent to bear me before it? In some such sort as this, believers are oftentimes led to reason within themselves, and to ask with Rebekah, *If it be so, why am I thus?*

1st, A believer may be led to this enquiry from a consciousness of the strength of his corruptions, which, the more they are opposed, the more they will rage and swell, and struggle to break forth. The perverseness of our nature is most discovered by the pure and holy precepts of the law of God; for what this law forbids, corrupt nature inclines to practice, and on the contrary what it enjoins, nature oppugns and hates; the reason of all this is given in those words, Rom. viii, 7, "for the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not

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“subject to the law of God, neither indeed can
“be.”

When a person has been under the teachings of the spirit of God, and made truly sensible that he has no worth, or excellency in him to recommend him to the favour of a holy and sin-hating God, and has been brought with heart and hand to subscribe the words of the prophet, *Is. lxiiv, 6*, “we are all as an unclean thing, and all our
“righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away;” yet after this to find pride stealing in upon his performances, and setting a value on what he is, and what he does, and his heart ready to say my own right hand hath gotten me this honour; I say when a person finds it thus, he may well ask in language like unto my text, if I am born of God, *why am I thus?*

Again, when a believer finds himself closely beset with an earthly mind, and altho’ he is thoroughly convinced of the emptiness of all created good, yet feels his heart inclining and warping thereto, as though there was something desirable in these perishable things, and that could deserve the attention of one that was born heir of an heavenly inheritance, he may well wonder at himself and ask with Rebekah, *If it be so, why am I thus?*

Again, when a believer has so often met with his God in the ways of his appointment, and his heart has been filled with joy and gladness, so that he has been brought with Peter to say, it is good to be here; yet after this, to feel his heart averse to holy ordinances, and a backwardness to use those very means he has been so often blessed in; this naturally leads him to call in question the
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truth of his former experiences. And when (as may sometimes be the case) hardness of heart be-sets him in the most melting ordinances, so that heaven above is to his conception as brass, and the earth beneath his feet as iron, Deut. xxviii. 23, inasmuch that the most powerful and most awakening preaching seems as nothing, the hardness of his heart, like the scales of Leviathan is impenetrable, iron is like straw, and brass as rotten wood, Job xli. 27, and this may sometimes continue so long, that a believer may be led to ask with a brother in the like state, *is his mercy clean gone for ever?* Sure I had never any true faith in Jesus, sure I have not one spark of real grace, if I have, *why am I thus?* When a believer finds himself thus shut up in the dark caverns of nature, and assaulted by strong and powerful temptations it is not to be wondered at if he should be led to conclude against himself and doubt the truth of all his former experience.

12^d, A believer may be brought to question his state from a sense of the weakness and feebleness of his graces. That faith which should be as a tree, bearing the fruits of love, joy, and peace in abundance, he now finds to be weak and wavering, and although like Peter, he once could tread the raging deep in the strength of his confidence; yet now the winds are boisterous, and the billows foam and swell, so that he seems ready to sink into the bottom of despair; he sees and knows that there is no salvation but in Jesus, yet he is afraid to venture his soul upon him, a sight of his own unworthiness, and the strong temptations of Satan, almost totally beat down his shield; he can but

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feebly take hold on Jesus, and faintly cry, *Lord help me, save or I perish.*

Again, when he finds so little love to God, notwithstanding, mercies, benefits, and blessings, so exceedingly multiplied unto him day by day, he may well be led to question his state and the truth of his conversion. Was ever love like thine, O thou most adorable Jesus? Was ever love manifested in so strange and mysterious a manner, and to creatures so vile and undeserving? Well might the apostle cry out in rapture and astonishment, *herein is love! Behold what manner of love! He took not on him the nature of angels, but laid hold on the seed of Abraham; sinning angels are left without a Redeemer, without a Mediator, confined under chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day; but sinning men are redeemed with the precious blood of the son of God; as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, 1 Pet. i. 19.* And yet says the believer under the strongest conviction of these interesting truths, truths that astonish angels, truths more than enough to break the hardest heart, and thaw the soul most frozen by sin into the softest relentings, and even to fire it with an unquenchable flame; my heart is cold, and my affections are so little moved towards this gracious Saviour of poor sinners, that I scarce can say I love him; and if there be any gracious principle in my soul, if I am born of God, *why am I thus?*

Again, says the believer, those spiritual joys I once tasted and that filled my raptured soul with unspeakable delight, now droop and wither, like the fading vine, nipped by the bleak winds of winter, and the comforter that formerly cheered my

My soul seems to be far from me. My hope of everlasting blessedness how low, how wavering; and how much backwardness I feel to those duties, which a little while ago were my sole pleasure and delight. I feel my heart so prone to start aside from God, and although I would do good, I find so much evil in my heart struggling to break forth into action, that I am constrained to ask with Rebekah, *if it be so, why am I thus?*

AS the people of God, for whose use this is principally intended, often experience some-what like this, and have their hearts made heavy through manifold temptations, so that they are sometimes ready to give up all for gone, to cast away their shield, and say in haste there is no hope; I shall in the second place offer some considerations to remove their doubts, settle their minds in peace, and make it appear that notwithstanding they are thus, they may yet be in the favour of God, and heirs of the kingdom.

1st, It is to be noted, that by nature we are dark and blind, and past all sense of feeling; we view every object both within us and without us through a false and deceitful glass; our sins which like huge mountains are heavy and hateful enough to sink our souls to the lowest hell, we view through sins inverted tube and consider them as mole-hills, little blemishes below the notice of God, and common to us as men, and therefore are under no concern about them. Nor can it be otherwise with an unconverted man, for 1st, *the God of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ to who is the image of the invisible God, should shine unto them,* 2 Cor. iv. 4. and as nothing but light

can discover darkness, so long as they are destitute of the former, they must needs be drenched in the latter; therefore that mystery of iniquity, the desperately wicked, and deceitful heart is hid from their eyes, and they walk fearless and unconcerned as on smooth and even ground, while hell yawns beneath to receive them, and tophet is moved to meet them should they die in their unregenerate state. 2d, Their minds are so amused and taken up with the care and pleasures of this life, that they have no leisure to attend to inward things, peace of conscience, the love of God, and joy in the spirit are things these strangers taste not, know not, nor intermeddle with. Sin is so far from being the plague of the soul, that as a sweet morsel it is rolled under the tongue, and the full gratification of those lusts and evil desires the believer groans under, is the greatest happiness the unbeliever knows. Now a clear sight of such depravity of nature, the wickedness of the heart, and the great evil of sin, must strongly indicate the light of grace discovering all this, *for whatever says the apostle makes manifest is light*, Eph. v. 13.

2d, When we add to what has been said of the unregenerate man, that sin and the God of this world have not only blinded his mind that he sees not the evil of sin, but also his heart is hardened past all sense of feeling. The most awful judgments of God that ever the world knew, although they may for a moment startle him, and seem to amaze him, yet leave no lasting impressions upon his mind, nor affect him with any real sorrow for sin. Plague, earthquake, sword, and famine, may appear in all their dreadful forms, yet leave the stupid sinner just the same; having no perception
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of the evil of sin, he dreads not the wrath of God when most awfully revealed from heaven against it. The unbeliever knows not what it is to be pricked in the heart, and wounded in his spirit under a sense of sin; he has never felt the bitterness of a quickened conscience bleeding with repeated crimes, and pierced through and through with the sword of the spirit; and therefore having never felt the gall and wormwood, having never drank of the bitter cup of penitential sorrow, he neither loaths sin, nor loves holiness, nor is at all concerned about the salvation of his soul. Now on the contrary, whatever weaknesses the believer groans under, whatever defection he finds in his graces; when he finds his faith most weak, his hope most wavering, his joys most withering, and his heart most wandering, yet he can appeal to him that knows his heart, that to will is present with him, Rom. vii. 18. And as nothing less than the power of God can incline and dispose us to will that which is good, Ps. cx. 3. this shews that a believer, whatever his spiritual conflicts are, is influenced by grace.

3d, It should be observed, that although justification is an instantaneous work, and the new creature is born compleat in all its members; yet sanctification, as it consists in the growth and increase of those members is progressive; and believers are exhorted to mortify the deeds of the body through the spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God, Rom. viii. 13. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Therefore we are neither to expect an immediate and intire subjection of our corruptions, or perfection of our graces; this would be to expect what scripture saints never experienced. We hear

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blessed Paul giving in his experience, and as if we were setting up a way-mark for believers to enquire their road and ascertain the truth of their profession by, Rom. vii. 25. *that which I do, I allow not, for what I would, that do I not, but what I hate, that do I*, ver. 22. *I delight in the law of God, after the inward man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, &c.* And the same apostle, when writing to the church at Phillippi, says, *not as though I had already attained, either were yet already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that, for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus*, chap. iii. 12. Seeing then that in the truly regenerate, the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the canaanites are not at once expelled from the land; believers hold fast your shield, and let not go your confidence which hath great recompence of reward, Heb x. 35.

4th, Perhaps you that are enquiring with Rebekah, if it be so, why am I thus? Have been many years in the service, or rather in the thralldom of sin and satan, and have long yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity, to iniquity, Rom. vi. 19. so that according to the common proverb, long use had brought on a second nature; now it is not at all strange, that nature should struggle and labour to force its former passage, and obstinately oppose whatever would hinder its progress. This perverseness of nature, strengthened by habit and custom, is represented by the prophet as altogether unconquerable; *can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil*, Jer. xiii. 23. Here you see such a change and reformation is looked upon as impossible,
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something quite beside the course of nature, and beyond its power to effect; but what is too difficult for nature, is not beyond the reach of grace, for things *impossible with men, are possible with God*. The strength and violence of your corruptions may serve to humble you, and shew you the malignant nature of sin; but that you are not captivated and carried away by its impetuosity, may serve to comfort you, and shew you the power and efficacy of almighty grace.

13th, Let the believer under soul-conflicts remember, that the very thing which often gives him trouble and concern, (I mean the opposition he finds within,) is that which may greatly serve to administer comfort and support unto him; inasmuch as these inward struggles denote, and arise from contrary principles. When Rebekah came to enquire of the Lord, it was said to her, two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; this was spoken with reference to Jacob and Esau, the children she was then pregnant with, and may very well set forth the state of every child of God; for as the children struggled in her womb, so there is a perpetual struggle in the soul renewed by grace; but as it was said to her in the following words, "the elder shall serve the younger," so will it be in the case of the believer. The carnal mind must lose its enmity to holiness, e'er it cease to oppose it; but the unalterable decree is past, the elder shall serve the younger; *nature*, however obstinate and perverse must yield at length to the superior all conquering force of sovereign *grace*. Take courage then poor soul, many waters cannot quench love, that spark of grace amidst
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the ocean of thy corruptions, shall still burn and break forth into a flame; it is like a grain of mustard-seed, which when cast into the ground is least of all grain, but when grown is the largest of all herbs. Wouldest thou know and understand this miracle, why this little spark still burns, notwithstanding the devil employs all his engines to quench it, and thy own corruptions like so many water floods seem ready to overwhelm it; turn aside with Moses, and behold, *the Lord was in the bush*, this explained the mystery; and it is the Lord supplies with oil the assaulted flame, which can never be extinguished until the fulness which there is in Jesus be exhausted.

6th, Weak believers often distress themselves, when they feel their graces weak, and their comforts low, by supposing that if they were really of God, they should continually live upon the desirable mountains, and feel their joys abound like the swelling streams of Jordan; whereas it should be considered that the quality, not the quantity of grace proves a change in the soul. We read in the word of God, of strong faith, and of little faith, there are babes in Christ, as well as fathers; and those, whatever conceptions they have of themselves, are no less heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ than these. Let it therefore be your principal care to prove the verity of your grace, for no bastard in this sense shall be admitted into the congregation of the Lord; and what has been delivered in the former particulars, may serve as a touch-stone for this end and purpose. True grace will always prove it self to be such, and although great grace is much to be desired for present happiness; yet grace in the lowest degree
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by opposing all sin, and inclining to all holiness, will never be withdrawn from the soul possessed thereof, but will terminate in glory. Some will perhaps say, if glory be inseparately connected with the lowest degree of grace, and this doctrine be taught and inculcated, it cuts the very sinews of endeavour, and encourages men to settle upon their lees.

But in answer to this, it should be remembered, that such as can find themselves disposed herefrom to slacken the reins and abate their speed, give the most flagrant proof, that they themselves are utter strangers to that grace we speak of; the nature of which is, not to oppose some sin but all; not to regard some duties only, but to have respect unto all the commandments of God.

7th, The case is widely different between the man who having fallen into the hands of his enemies, is now disarmed, shackled, loaded with chains, and fast shut up in prison; and the man, who (although through surprize and unwatchfulness has lost a little ground and given his enemies some advantages,) yet holds fast his sword and shield, continues on the field of battle, and is courageously fighting to retrieve his lost honour: the one is a wretched captive, the other, though worsted by his foes, is still a fighting soldier under the banner of his prince. Good men have had their imperfections, few or none without some failing. The holy scriptures have faithfully recorded both the virtues and the vices, of men most excellent in their generations; and even saints have sinned, and in the brightest character there has been some flaw. These things are not recorded in God's blessed book (nor spoken now,) that we should imitate, but shun the rocks they

struck against; and if at any time like our fore-runners we should start aside, and sin against our God, we may (encouraged by that grace and mercy manifested to them in raising and restoring them,) humble ourselves under the hand of him, *who is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever.*

It is one of the special privileges of the people of God, that they are always under his eye, and are the special objects of his care; the prophet sweetly sings this song, *a vineyard of red wine, is my church, I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it. I will keep it night and day.* Is. xxvii, 2, 3, and therefore he that is their strength being at their right hand they shall not greatly fall. A believer may be caught, yea and without watchfulness and prayer he certainly will, but through the power of that grace that is given *to reign in his heart thro' righteousness,* he will be preserved from captivity; *for the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way; though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upbraideth him with his hand.* Ps. xxxvii, 23.

8th, All things here below are subjected to perpetual change, and every hour teaches something unknown to it's predecessor. The sun, although incessantly sending forth rays of light and heat; yet we do not always enjoy the benefit of the one, nor constantly live under the reviving influence of the other; night and darkness succeeds our brightest days, and nipping frosts our warmest seasons. Now in a world of perpetual whirling, where all things roll round in ceaseless succession, yea where the world itself is growing old, and must shortly change it's fashion, what reason has

a believer to imagine that he shall be exempted?

When we shall have laid aside these rags of mortality, and these souls shall animate bodies of a more spiritual nature; bodies fashioned like to the glorious body of our dear Redeemer; then we may expect, nay certainly shall be exempt from all mutation, and enjoy for ever the *Rest* that remains for the people of God; but such state of peace, tranquillity and stability, we shall never find below. However this may comfort the believer under all the ebbings and flowings of his spiritual joys, and under the greatest variations of his faith, that the object thereof is unchangeable, and it's foundation immovable; *Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* Thou poor desponding creature, did not this sun shine yesterday, or the day before, and because it is a little cloudy to-day shouldst thou conclude it is not risen, nor will ever rise again? Thou art perhaps at present in great heaviness through manifold temptations, hear what the apostle Peter saith, *it is for a season*, who knows how long that season may endure? But as *there is need*, 1 Pet. i. 6, it shall continue no longer than till the gracious purpose thereof shall be accomplished; *such heaviness may endure for a night, but joy shall come in the morning*, Ps. xxx, 5. Believers, are often like children long accustomed to the breast, and if for a small season they are deprived of their joyous sensations, (although parental kindness and infinite wisdom mean it for their good,) they fret and pine, and what is worst through unbelief, insinuate that God is unfaithful.

It is readily granted, that to live under the smiles of the Redeemer's face, and enjoy without interruption

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the comfortable sensations of his favour, is very desirable; but as this cannot always be experienced, the prophet Isaiah has directed us what to betake ourselves to, under the hidings of his face, ch. 50. 10, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." 9th, It may often serve to alleviate the bitterness of believers trials to consider that their trials are not peculiar to their person so much as their state, I mean their spiritual state; for although no circumstances however favourable, can free us in the present life, from crosses and difficulties; yet these are exceedingly multiplied from the time we commence disciples indeed of the blessed Jesus. Somewhat of this our Saviour gave us reason to expect from those words, "if ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John xv. 19, so that believers may expect trials from this quarter. And we may assure ourselves the devil will run to the utmost length of his line to disquiet and distress the people of God; for as his name satan signifies hatred or one that is an adversary from real hate, so he is an adversary to all men, but especially to such as are born of God, "and created anew in Christ Jesus:" and concerning these the apostle Peter says, "your adversary the devil," emphatically "yours, as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pet. v. 8, yet adds the apostle, "resist him stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions

"flictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

The faints of God in every age and place have had their trials, and oftentimes the greatest faints the greatest trials. Job was a one of a thousand in the earth, there was none like him in his day; yet you see his trials were such as no other was tried with; both inward and outward he was oppressed, wounded and sore smitten; *without were fightings, and within were fears*; bruised by satan, plundered by the Sabeans, afflicted with a grievous disease in his body, and all these sorrows heightened and increased by darkness and desertion in his soul, yet under all this weight of woe, he feebly hangs upon his God, but firmly resolves not to quit his hold, "tho' he slay me, yet will I trust in him," ch. xiii, 15. Few of the ancients were more eminent than David, yet he had many a bitter trial both inward and outward; as few in his day experienced more of the power and comforts of real religion than he, so few knew like him, what it was to suffer the pain of an absent God, and be left under the hidings of his face. The Lord looked and David lived, but he hid *his face and he was troubled*, Ps. xxx, 6, and under dejections of soul at other times we hear him strengthening himself in God; *Why art thou so full of heaviness O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me, put thy trust in God.* &c. Ps. xlii, 11.

Asaph also a faint in the Jewish church, and a singer in Israel, bitterly complains in a time of darkness, and when his graces were at an ebb-tide, as it were. "Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his

“ his mercy clean gone for ever ? Doth his promise fail for evermore ? Hath God forgotten to be gracious ? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies ?” Ps. lxxvii, 7, 8, 9.

Peter's faith was strong enough to consolidate the waters of the sea, and make them as a pavement for his feet, to stand and walk upon to Jesus ; yet in order that Peter should know from whence his help and safety came, the wind and waves are ordered to assail his faith, and Peter now begins to sink, happy was it for him that the helping hand of Jesus was so nigh. So that in all these instances thou mayest perceive poor doubting soul, thy case is not singular ; faith is precious and must be tried like gold, and if thou didst never doubt the truth of thy graces, under a sight and sense of the feebleness thereof, there is little cause to think thou hast any grace at all. Jesus Christ himself the great high-priest of our profession had manifold trials and temptations, yea *was in all things tempted like as we are*, but *he resisted unto blood, striving against sin*, and is now as our forerunner entred into the holy of holies, and has left an example to his followers to tread in his steps.

Lastly, Believers should not be surprized, nor greatly cast down, although they feel their corruptions strong and stubborn, and their graces weak and feeble, nor should they under the most sharp and bitter conflicts of soul cast away, nor suffer the devil to tear from them their *confidence*, *which hath great recompence of reward*. It should be always remembered, that so long as we are in the body we are in the field of battle ; the world and the devil can never be reconciled to true grace
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and godliness, therefore you must expect many a buffeting from these irreconcilable adversaries. and you may depend upon it nature will be nature still, and the war will never cease 'till nature die; grace and corruption, flesh and spirit, like fire and water, can never dwell together in peace, and untill the believer put off his body, he must never put off his christian armour, drop his shield, or sheath his sword. Now from all the considerations I have laid before you, (which I desire may be treasured up in your minds, against a time of need, that whenever through the strength of your corruptions, or the feebleness of your graces, you may like Rebekah be led to ask as touching the truth of your conversion, *if it be so, why am I thus?* You may answer the question and silence the doubt.) It appears, all things considered, not so strange that believers should in such soul-conflicts doubt of their state, as it is, that they doubt of it no more, and do not cast away all their confidence. But probably, thus much is permitted, to shew them what they are, to keep them humble and dependant; and no more is permitted, lest the enemy should say, *I have prevailed against him*, and the hearts of God's dear children, should be overwhelmed with too much sorrow.

I now go on in the third place to give some directions to the believer, for the strengthening of his faith and every other grace, and for his more comfortable progress through the wilderness of this world. And here let it be observed, that as the strength of the believer's corruptions, and the feebleness of his graces have frequently given him cause to make the enquiry in my text, *so the weakening of the one, and the strengthening of the other,*

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is what the believer has principally to do. I shall therefore immediately go about to give directions for the mortification of his corruptions, lust, pride, earthly-mindedness, &c. And although in an indirect, yet in an effectual way.

As these evil tempers, desires, and dispositions, branch from the fertile soil of a corrupt nature; when we have taken the utmost pains to prune and lop their luxurious growth, they will quickly bud and shoot forth a-fresh, so as to employ all our time, in unsuccessful labour, and to the neglect of a more profitable cultivation of faith, love, joy, &c.

To quicken and strengthen your graces, will be, though an indirect, yet the most certain and effectual way of subduing and mortifying your corruptions, therefore in order to this, observe the following directions.

1st, See that your hearts be sound in believing; faith is a parent grace, and therefore must be strong and stable, that all other graces depending upon it, may be active and vigorous also. If your faith be weak, the foundation of your hope will be wavering, and all the joys of hope withering. That the heirs of promise might have strong consolation through the immutability of the counsel of God, he confirmed it by an oath; but in proportion to the credence given to God's word and oath, will be this consolation; therefore I would say with Solomon little difference from this, *above all keepings, keep thy faith.*

If your faith be weak, the flame and fervour of your love will be feeble; for it is by faith we see these things that are invisible, which God has laid up in store, and reserves for his people, and from the
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the discoveries of his love to us, (of which faith gives us the clearest and most comprehensive view) we love him again; but if faith be weak, and we have not full and clear views of his love thereby, our hearts will remain unmoved, and our affections unenkindled. Therefore,

2dly, That your faith may be strong, stable, and active in the production of every other grace, remember that faith has for its foundation the infallible, and immoveable word of God, "Who is not a man that he should lie, nor a son of man that he should deceive;" Numb. xxiii. 19. and has for its object a bleeding, groaning, dying Jesus, finishing the glorious work of man's redemption on the accursed tree; and is ever conversant about what he has done and suffered, with the sufficiency thereof, for the salvation of sinners. Let your ears therefore be all attention to the blessed word of God, this principally treats of Jesus, *in the volume of the book*, the bulk, the substance, it is written of him, and herein the father shews his pleasure in him, *this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased*. Let your eyes be fixed on the cross of Christ, and let your hearts at all times meditate on the exceeding greatness of his sufferings and his love. Yet more particularly, keep in sight the blood of that dear man of sorrow, this is the sole, and it is a sovereign balm for wounded bleeding consciences. Satan will often set before you the greatness of your sins, with all their dreadful and heart-cutting aggravations, in order to beat down the shield of your faith, and fill your souls with desponding fears. But to the multitude and magnitude of your sins, when thus brought back into your memory, oppose the blood

of Jesus, bathing as it were your whole man, soul and body in the purple flood, *in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness*, Zech. xiii. 1.

It is said of the devil, who is the father of lies, that he sometimes speaks truth, only say they, when he does, it is not out of love to the truth, but to answer some diabolical purpose; now this is the very case here; when he sets your sins before you and suggests their manifold and various aggravations, your consciences bear testimony to the lamentable truth; but what he designs is, to distress you on the account of them, and insinuate that the guilt and heinousness thereof stands fresh in the memory and full in the view of God's justice. My brethren we need not be ignorant of his devices; if by any means he draws off our attention from Jesus, so far he gains an advantage over us; let your sins be placed in the most formidable order before you, and armed with aggravations the most penetrating and piercing; yet let your faith call forth the invaluable blood of Jesus, let this balm be applied to the conscience most wounded and bruised, and it will straightway effect a cure. What could stern and inflexible justice inflict, that Jesus did not suffer? What sins could be too great for the blood of God to atone, Acts xx. 28. Believers, see in a glorious type the destruction of your sins; when Israel's mighty host walked through the sandy deep, the sea formed walls of water on their right hand and on their left; but when the enemies of God pursued them, the waters of the seas returned, and overwhelmed the chariots and horsemen of Pharaoh, and all his mighty men, so that the *Israelites* whom they pursued saw them no more; so does the blood of Jesus swallow up the guilt

guilt of all your mighty sins, God for his sake *casts them like a stone*, and they sink like lead, as sang the children of Israel, *into the bottom of the deep*, Micah vii. 18, 19.

Again, keep full in your eye that righteousness, that all perfect and compleat righteousness that was wrought out by the blessed Jesus in his sorrowful, but most holy and obedient life; as by his death he made full satisfaction to the injured law, so in his life he paid an exact and full obedience to the preceptive law; hence says the prophet Is. *the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake, he will magnify the law and make it honourable*, chap. xlii. 21. This compleat righteousness of our Immanuel, my brethren, is that excellent robe you must appear in when you stand before the king; no raiment besides this can render you acceptable guests at the marriage table; this is the righteousness the great preacher of the gentiles desired to be found in, and this is what the believer shall glory in, in every age and place, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*. Is. xlv. 24. Let not the devil and your own hearts deceive you by setting before you in a false light, the excellency and worthiness of your own performances, for there is no real worth in any thing you do, imperfection cleaves to, and intirely spoils your very best performances; and that your works as believers are pleasing to God, is not for their real worth, but as they are the fruits of faith in Christ. Let your faith therefore be fixed continually on the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ; and while in these you see salvation finished, "Mercy and truth meeting together, righteousness and peace kissing one another,"

“another,” Ps. lxxxv. 10, and a way laid open by infinite wisdom for God to be just, and yet justify the ungodly; I say, while you view these effects of everlasting kindness, let your thoughts trace back this lucid stream towards the inexplorable fountain. What see you here dear souls but an unfathomable abyss of love, love most amazing, most unparallelled, and everlasting; the strangeness of this love is discovered in the eternal purposes thereof, and runs through the whole execution of those purposes; but its mysterious nature, its prodigious extent, its length and breadth, and height and depth, angels desire to look into and comprehend in vain. Believers, often meditate on the exceeding greatness of that love, that caused the Lord of glory to bow the heavens, to put off his royal-robes, and put on the rags of mortality, and cloath himself with clay; *love* that supported him under his thirty years of suffering and was stronger than death; settle this also in your hearts that whom *Jesus loves, he loves to the end.*

But this shall bring me to a second direction.

Settle in your hearts these following particulars concerning God in Christ,—

1st, The unchangeableness of his love.

2d, His faithfulness.

3d, “The exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe,

And 4th, His government of the world, briefly of these.

1st, Let not any thing persuade you to think, that God is a changeable being like you; “for he is in one mind and who can turn him,” Job xxiii. 13. Has he set his love upon you? He loves you

you not for your own excellencies, but he loves you in his son, and therefore can never have a reason to withdraw it; hence it comes to pass that whom he loves, *he loves to the end*, and will save them to the *uttermost*.

2d, How should it rejoice your heart, and confirm your faith and hope, that you have to do with a faithful God, who also will perform every word of his covenant-engagements made in his well-beloved son: man is so faithless and deceitful a creature that a woe is denounced against every one that puts trust in him, Jer. xvii, 5, for every brother will supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders, ch. ix. 4. When we have to deal with men, we must first try them, and then trust so far as we have tried; but in our dealings with God, we may venture to take his word, that is, we may trust him first, and then try him so far as we have need, for there is no unrighteousness in him.

3d, Be well persuaded of the exceeding greatness of that power which is engaged to keep you; *a vineyard of red wine is my beloved, I the Lord do keep it*, and who shall make a breach upon those souls that omnipotence resolves to defend? When our Saviour declared to his disciples after his resurrection, that all power in heaven and earth was given to him, do you think this was the language of pride and ostentation. Far be it from the meek and humble Jesus, it was for our support and consolation under all our conscious weaknesses, to teach us to look to him, to depend on him, to live upon his fulness, and to derive help and strength, and salvation in every time of need. Believers are not left to be their own keepers,

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they are the Lord's jewels, his excellent ones in the earth, and as it is his good pleasure to give unto them a kingdom, so he puts forth his power to preserve and keep them for that kingdom; this comfortable truth is holden forth in the strongest expressions by the apostle Peter, *who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.* 1 Pet. i. 5.

4th, It will not a little conduce to your comfort and establishment, to settle firmly in your hearts God's government of the world. If chance could be supposed to have any existence or share in the disposal of events, we could have no stable foundation for our faith in any of the promises of God; for notwithstanding all the divine purposes and promises of good to his people, it might chance to be otherwise. What is recorded in the 97th Ps. ver. 1, 2, has often been a great support to my soul, and may be so to yours also. *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of the isles be glad; Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.* You may meet with many providences, in your pilgrimage, which as they may be dark and inexplicable, will be greatly distressing to you, if not considered and viewed as the effects of unerring wisdom and parental love. *We know, says blessed Paul, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose.* Rom. viii, 28. And why is this, but because all the trials and difficulties of his children are dealt out to them in just weight and measure, and not an hair of their head shall perish but by his permission.

3dly, Attend not too much to the evils of your hearts;

hearts; it is necessary to know yourselves, but it is also necessary to know so much of yourselves, that you cannot heal nor help yourselves; therefore to be perpetually poring on the depth and danger of the wound when you ought to make the most speedy application of the balm that must cure it, is injudicious and unsafe. All that can really profit our souls is treasured up in the Lord Christ, and we are exhorted, while *running with patience the race that is set before us to look unto Jesus*, Heb. xii. 2, for as he is the *author of faith* in every believer, so must he also be the *finisher*. I am persuaded that believers often suffer a great deal, by this device of satan; in this he transforms himself into an angel of light, and while he insinuates the duty and usefulness of self-examination, he strives to fasten and confine the eyes of the soul, and whole attention of the man, to the depravity and corruption of his nature. I do not mean by this that believers should not look into their own hearts and practice the useful duty of self-examination, yea, and with the sweet singer of *Israel*, pray that God himself would search their hearts and know them; for I think it is impossible for a child of God to go on in his spiritual progress, and not be often alarmed with the horrid clashing of arms, and the dreadful din of war, which must necessarily call forth his attention, and lead him to enquire how *the battle goes*; but from such knowledge as a believer must have of his own weakness, and the strength of his own corruptions, I would have him never to lose sight of Jesus the captain of his salvation. What a child of God sees, feels, and knows of the feebleness of his graces, and the strength of his corruptions,

ruptions, should keep him humble; but from the fulness which by faith he sees, feels, and knows to be in Jesus, he needs never be dejected. Fix the eye of your faith then my brethren on the cross of Christ, and the way of salvation will be always open before you.

4thly, Do not think you can derive that help and strength, &c. from Christ we have been speaking of; but in the way of his appointment; if you do not find your hearts disposed to use the means of grace, if these ways of wisdom are not ways of pleasantness to you, you have no good ground to believe that you are in Christ at all, or do really partake of the true grace of God. Some get a notion into their heads about election, and that they are elected of God to everlasting life, while there yet appears no scripture signs of their effectual calling. If any of you are of this number you do but deceive your own souls, and cause the good way of God to be evil spoken of, and if a miracle of mercy does not prevent it, you will become brands for the fire of hell. That there is an election of grace, none that reads the bible with attention can deny; but the same blessed word informs us that the end and means are inseparably connected, and such as *were predestinated to the adoption of children*, Eph. i. 5. *are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them*, chap. ii. 10. Therefore, give diligence to the ordinances of God; be much in prayer, read the word of God, hear it preached, break bread in remembrance of Christ's love at every opportunity, and often meditate on that love, that free, sovereign, distinguishing love, that (while many are yet left,) has taken hold on you,

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gthly, In a word, and to conclude, *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, put on the whole armour of God*, but above all hold fast your shield, by this ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the devil; take the sword of the spirit, and go on in the strength of Jesus, and yet a little while and your warfare shall be for ever accomplished.

What could animate and inspire with renewed courage and magnanimity of mind the sweating warrior so much as to hear his captain say in words like these? "Fear not my fellow-soldiers, the day is won, victory already declares in our favour, nothing remains but to follow me on to the spoil of the field." This my dear brethren is your case, the work is done, redemption is finished, Canaan is possessed, yea heaven itself is taken for you in Christ your victorious head; be strong, fear not, set your feet upon the necks of those proud aspiring lusts, pull down those high-places of *Baal*, let the Lord Christ have all the glory, and the happiness is yours.

I should dismiss you, but I feel my heart enlarged, there is here a multitude of precious souls, O that I knew how to speak a word that might reach the heart of each individual. *O earth, earth*, hear the word of the Lord, O that there might be a shaking amongst these dry bones, that the eternal spirit of the living God would now breathe into them that they might live. Are there not some here to whom I have been speaking parables? Are not some of you better acquainted with, and more concerned about, the state of your bodies than your souls? Well, yet a little while, and it will be too late to wish you had been wise, *now, now,*

now, is the accepted time, now, now, is the day of salvation; if these sermons you hear do not become a savour of life unto you, they will be a savour of death unto death. May the dear Lord command a blessing on what has been spoken, and make it truly profitable to all your souls. Amen, Amen.



S E R M O N XII.

MATTHEW xix, 20.

What lack I yet?

TH E S E are the words of one, who like many a proud and self-opinionated professor, was full of himself, *rich*, as he thought, *and increased with goods*; but was in reality an utter stranger to himself, as a fallen and weak creature; and to that pure and perfect law, whose precepts are exceeding broad, and concerning which, he scrupled not to affirm, *all these things have I kept from my youth up*. There are several things remarkable in this passage, and deserving of serious attention. Jesus had many that followed him, from place to place; and many that applied unto him from many motives, and very different; some were moved with curiosity, seeing the miracles which he wrought upon the bodies of those that were diseased; and others from more base motives still, *because they did eat of the loaves and were filled*; and some attended

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to him through a persuasion that he was the *Messiah*, that was to come into the world. What moved our querist in the text to apply to him, has been matter of doubt amongst commentators; some think he came seriously, to receive information from our Lord, agreeable to the question first proposed, *good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?* Others think, that he came in a captious spirit with an intent to puzzle our Saviour; thinking from the pride of his heart that he was too wise to be instructed, and too holy to need an addition of any other virtue. However, an attention to the description given of his person and deportment, in this whole affair, may possibly fix our judgment concerning him, as determinately as is necessary; it being more immediately our concern to detect the hypocrisy of our own hearts, than that of others. It seems the person that here came to our Lord was a young man; alas! how few of these come to enquire about eternal life; young persons often think that religion is only fit for the grey-headed, and such as are bowed down with age and infirmities; but however there is one young man comes to Jesus, may he be followed by multitudes.

But it is furthermore said of him that he was very rich; it is therefore more strange to hear him talking about spiritual things; most youths in the like situation are throwing loose the reins of sensual appetite, and evil desire, and their chief enquiry is, *who will shew us any good?* Probably in this degenerate age, such indications of piety would be esteemed the buddings of enthusiasm, the symptoms of a distempered brain, or the fruits
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and effects of gross ignorance. But none of these appear to be the case of this young man, for we are informed by the evangelist Luke, that he was a ruler, a magistrate, and being yet young it is not unlikely his abilities were bright and promising. But be this as it will, he had youth and riches, and if one may suppose his professions real, so that he had the fear of God also; one might almost venture to call him the phoenix of his age; and would God, viewing him in this light, we might see many young and rich persons treading in his steps. This young gentleman came to Jesus, and said unto him, *Good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?*

What good thing, it seems as if he should say, there is no task so arduous, no suffering so great, that I am not willing, yea desirous to do and suffer, that I may be saved; perhaps some of you may be forward as he was, to make such profession with your lips, concerning whom God may say as he once did of professing Israel; *O that there were in them such a heart.* After our Saviour had reproved him for calling him *good*, and yet at the same time disbelieved in him as God, besides whom says he, *there is none so*; he answers to his question, *if thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments.* It is by no means to be admitted, that our Lord here dallied with the young man, when suitable to his character, and behaviour at other times, he should have directed him; nor that he spoke ironically, and tauntingly; but that observing the spirit, and disposition of the querist, and through a prerogative peculiar to himself knowing the mistaken conceptions of his heart, he prescribed the most effectual remedy for the

the removal of his disorder, and laid before him the most exact rule, whereby to adjust the work he seemed so desirous to compleat and perfect. One may charitably suppose, this youth had been singular in his life and conduct; not running into the follies, and extravagancies which too many in the like condition do; thereby sowing those seeds, those pernicious seeds, that frequently ripen into a mortal harvest in the midst of life, and bring down the grey hairs of their tender and indulgent parents with sorrow to the grave. He probably had been observant of the rites and ceremonies enjoined by Moses, yea it is not unlikely he had been kept from murder, adultery, &c. as to the outward and gross acts, and therefore like Saul of Tarsus might think himself *as touching the righteousness of the law*, to be blameless; but the want of attending to that pure and holy, that extensive and inflexible law, in it's spiritual nature; had betrayed him into the most gross and dangerous mistakes. And what is it but the like want of attention to this, that some are led to talk of salvation without a Saviour, and to expect mercy contrary to justice; and others in a spirit not alien to this mistaken youth, to boast of obedience in heart and life fully adequate and every way answerable to the largest demands of the injured law of God.

As the scriptures teach no way to life and salvation but Jesus Christ, as our Lord declared himself to be the only way to the father; and as none that are not conscious of their own sinfulness and helplessness will come to Christ, our Saviour's answer and instruction was the most pertinent and useful that could possibly have been given him; for the
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teaching of our Lord, may be supposed to run in this strain. "Young man thou appearest by thy question to be very desirous of eternal life, I am highly pleased with all that sincerely enquire after it, it is a laudable study; thou hast heard what the law says, *do this and thou shalt live*, the justice of God will insure eternal life on condition of perfect obedience, but a failure in that will expose the offender by the same justice to the curse and penalty."

Our Saviour could not possibly intend to direct the young man, so to *keep the commandments*, as that by his obedience he might obtain, that is, merit eternal life; seeing this would have clashed with the whole tenour of his gospel, and in respect of all such, rendered his life and death of no avail: but to correct the erroneous conceptions he had formed of his own holiness and at last to lead him as a poor helpless sinner to seek salvation in the righteousness of another. It is easy to perceive what a high opinion our religious pupil here, had of himself; for he scruples not to affirm without any manner of hesitation, upon our Lord's particularizing the duties of the second table, *all these things have I kept from my youth up*; pray who amongst you here this day can subscribe this declaration? *All these things*, not committed murder, adultery, not taken away by stealth that which was another's, not borne false witness against any, given the honour due to parents, and exercised the same love and good will to another, as to self; what and at all times, *from my youth up*? A bold assertion, having no foundation, or support, but pride and ignorance. *Pride*, in setting too great a value on his own imperfect services,
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and ignorance in the purity, and spirituality of those precepts, he supposed he had so perfectly fulfilled.

However, as he had applied to the great teacher of mankind for instruction, he will not send him away ignorant as he came; nor does he go about to prove by argument, that he was mistaken in himself; but takes a method the most short and effectual to convince him thereof, and as it were at one blow to sap the very foundation of his dependance, and lay his towering apprehensions in the dust. One may suppose our Saviour upon his asking, *what lack I yet?* addressing him in such sort as this; “Alas, poor youth, thy heart deceives thee, thou hast been far enough from keeping all these things, thou hast been greatly deficient in the duties both of the first and second table; it would be needless for me to accuse thee of thy want of love to God, it will sufficiently appear by bringing to the test thy professed love to thy neighbour as thyself; if thou wilt ascertain thy love to God and man, so that thou mayest be perfect, do this, as the proof of it, *sell that thou hast, and give to the poor.*” But here, his self-righteousness, was detected, for when he heard this, he went away sorrowful; was it because Jesus had vouchsafed to give him a full answer to his question? No, but because our Lord had set too great a price on eternal life; he must sell his all to buy this precious pearl; and desirous as he seems to have been of obtaining eternal life, yet at present he loved his money better. See my brethren, how deceitful is the heart of man. See what professions you may possibly make, and yet be under
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the power of a most dangerous delusion; what need there is for self-examination; what need to come to Christ to have our mistakes corrected, before it be too late. *If any man, saith our Lord, love father, or mother, wife, or children, lands or livings, more than me, he is not worthy of me, and if any man love the world, says his beloved disciple, the love of the father is not in him;* this young man loved the world, therefore notwithstanding all his profession, was a stranger to true godliness; take good heed my dear hearers lest this should also be the case with some of you.

What lack I yet? Being destitute of the love of the father, as appears by his love of the world, what did he not lack? Or rather what had he, of which had he known and seen himself, he had not reason to be ashamed? I shall now, keeping this young ruler in view, proceed to enquire, and lay before you the following things:

1st, What a natural man hath, of which it may be said, *this is good.*

2d, What a man should have, to be acceptable to God.

3d, By what means these qualifications can be attained.

4th, How it will appear that a man possesses these.

5th, What must be the blessedness of such a state.

I am unwilling to suppose that any of my hearers this day, are of that number, who by the abuse of God's good creatures, deface the image of their glorious maker, (already too much obliterated) on their souls, and degenerate into worse than brute beasts, by the shameful sin of drunkenness;

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which to say no worse of it, is a gross abuse of those creature-comforts and enjoyments which the munificent donor of all our blessings, has graciously given, to be received *with thanksgiving*, and used to his glory. But if there should happen to be within the sound of my voice any such brute in human form; may he hear the word of the living God. "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night; till wine inflame them, and the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands." Is. v. 11, 12.

I am also unwilling to suppose that any who are now attending to hear the word of God, should ever be guilty of that, to which, in my opinion there is the least temptation of all the sins men commit, and therefore the offenders are the most inexcusable; I mean vain and common swearing; for whereas the *former*, renders a man only fit to associate with beasts, *this* makes him only fit for a companion of devils. *Swear not at all*, saith the blessed Jesus, "Neither by heaven for it is God's throne; nor by the earth for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem for it is the city of the great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black," Matt. v. 34, 35, 36. "Nor shalt thou take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

I am willing to believe that you, to whom I am at this time preaching the word of the Lord, are regardful of his sabbaths; that you do not consider the
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forest you are called to on this day, as a privilege granted you in common with the beasts that perish; a time for idleness, and self-indulgence; a day wherein you may delight yourselves, and pursue your own pleasures; but that you look upon it as the Lord's-Day, in which you are solely to be employed in his service, reading and hearing his word; and together with his people presenting your prayers and praises unto him. But if there should be any of you, who have not so high a regard for the sabbath of the Lord, but can sleep it away upon your beds, or spend it in walking abroad in pursuit of sensual delights; if you make no conscience of planning and scheming on his day, that you may execute the more speedily and effectually when the tedious hours of the sabbath shall be over; in all such cases be assured the Lord has an eye to you, nor shall you succeed in any of your wishes. The Israelites who went to seek manna on the sabbath-day found none, though on other days God sent it in abundance; nor shall ye be satisfied with the desires of your heart while ye lightly esteem the day of the Lord, and seek happiness in the labour of your own hands.

I am willing furthermore to believe, and in charity I hope, that you who are at this time in God's house, have no taste or relish for the play-house, and the fashionable amusements of the stage; which instead of correcting, corrupts the morals, and spreads infection where it promises to heal. Would we see the odiousness of vice, and be reminded of its inseparable connection with shame and suffering; the sacred historian has depicted the one in colours the most striking and disagreeable; and described the other in judg-

ments, the most awful and alarming, Gen. vi. 7. and 18, 19. Or do we wish to see the amiableness of virtue, and its certain reward; let us shift the scene, to a righteous Noah, a patient Job, or a devout and God-fearing Daniel; and whereas the former, are but the fictions of man's imagination, the latter, are matters of fact, supported by the veracity of God.

Nor can I be easily induced to believe, that you who pay a frequent attendance on the public ordinances of God, spend your hours and evenings in private at the card-table, tortured and torturing one another; or, of which, to say the best, is spurring on the speedy hours, which have already prepared themselves wings to expedite their flight, and when once gone can never be recalled. Nor am I willing to be persuaded that your hearts are engaged in the pursuit of any other of the falsely called pleasures of the world; which however lavish in the promises of *good*, and inviting in appearance, will at last not only leave the deluded mortal that pursues them unsatisfied and empty, but will plant in his bosom a pricking thorn; and pierce him through and through with many sorrows.

Now suppose all this be true that I am willing to believe concerning you, that you have turned away your eyes and ears from all these follies and vanities, from every of these acts of sin and disobedience; yet all this negative goodness, is but like a row of cyphers without an initial figure, amounting in the account of positive, or real virtue, to just nothing at all.

You may further suppose the natural man, frequently reading the scripture, the word of God,
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which contains in it all things that are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; yet as he may read, either out of some fanciful curiosity, or as matter of duty, and for which he expects to be rewarded; his practice may rather be blameable, than laudable. The Scribes and Pharisees, who were far enough from the knowledge of the scriptures, or receiving any good influence from them; yet read them very frequently, but partook so little of the spirit these holy writings should effect, that our Lord calls them painted sepulchers.

In a word, the natural man may pray, so did Saul of Tarsus, and the whole sect of the Pharisees; he may fast and give alms, so the proud boaster in the temple says he did; he may make a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus, be admitted on a judgment of charity, a member of the visible church; all this we read of Simon-magus, and yet like him be *in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity*. As all external actions, are but the effects of some interior cause, they must necessarily partake of its nature; and we have good authority to affirm, *that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit*. Hence there is no religious act, however specious in appearance, and though ever so much resembling the spiritual exercises of the truly regenerate; that bears any more proportion to them, or partakes any more of the nature of them, than a painted flame to a real fire, or an empty shade to solidity and substance.

There are many religious acts, which when considered in themselves are good, and which the truly pious will be found in the exercise of; such as reading and hearing the word of God, fasting,

praying, and alms-deeds, &c. but as the best and purest liquor by being put into tainted vessels, becomes infected and spoiled; so these acts, being performed by unholy persons, whose hearts and consciences are defiled, have nothing in them of that sweet savour, that thumamata which renders the prayers of the saints acceptable to God. The Holy-Ghost declares, *the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination*; none of his offerings are acceptable, nor doth a blessing accompany his labours; his heart and hands being defiled, every thing is polluted with his touch, and the wise man saith, *the plowing of the wicked is sin*, and these not having the fear of God before their eyes, have the curse of God entailed upon all their labours; and whereas, *whatsoever* the man does, that feareth God *shall prosper*; whatsoever these do shall be unsuccessful, unsatisfying.

What lack I yet? Said the young ruler. Rather what had he of which he had not reason to be ashamed? Our Saviour could have told him in few words, if his wisdom, as the divine teacher, had not suggested a more effectual method of shewing him his wants; that he *lacked* a heart renewed by grace; a pure fountain that might send forth more wholesome streams. This renewed heart as it was a principal thing this young man wanted; so it is a thing necessary for every man; for seeing we are by nature the *children of wrath*, nothing but *this* can make us children of grace. It is not so much to be wondered at, that a young person, full of himself, and rich in his own acquired righteousness, should be ignorant of what he was, and what he wanted; seeing an old ruler, and a disciple of Jesus, when applying to the great teacher

teacher for instruction betrayed so great ignorance, that spiritual regeneration was a mystery and a riddle to him. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.* To which Nichodemus replied, *how can this be?* If it be necessary for us to be *born again*; if we must needs be *renewed in the spirit of our mind*, it manifests something egregiously wrong in the contexture and œconomy of our intellectuals; and this thought, must needs mortify the haughty spirit of the natural man, and create in him an aversion to a doctrine, that lays the ax to the very root of his innate pride; and which, if true, must leave his salvation wholly and solely in the hands of the blessed spirit of God. Hence it comes to pass, that when the doctrine of regeneration is so plainly taught, and enforced by our Lord, and seconded by his apostles and all gospel-preachers; yet man's natural pride will not suffer him to submit to the important truth. And because the scripture is too full upon the point to be denied, and will admit of no evasion, as to the necessity of the thing; therefore something must be substituted in the stead of the real thing, bearing indeed its name, but as foreign to its nature, or the real thing itself as the effect is to the cause producing it; for a reformation of life and manners, when proceeding from a renewed heart, (which is not always the case) is but the effect of that inward cause. A renewed heart and mind is so necessary to give us acceptance with God, and to produce any works pleasing and acceptable, that the latter is altogether impossible without the former.

This young ruler, and with him, every natural
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man lacks faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no access to the father but by the son, nor is there any other name given under heaven, but that of Jesus whereby men can be saved. If we attempt to come to heaven, and the enjoyment of the blessed God another way than by Christ; we so far attempt to take the crown from the head of the Redeemer, to arrogate to ourselves the glory that solely belongs to him, and to subvert God's appointed method of salvation. When the Jews enquired of Jesus saying, *what shall we do that we may work the works of God?* This is the work of God, said our Lord, *that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* Whoever places his own works and doings in the place of Jesus, as that for which, he is to be accepted of God, tramples the blood of the covenant as it were beneath his feet, and makes the death and sufferings of Christ the Lord of no avail. Every Child of man that desires to know *what good thing he must do to inherit eternal life*, must be taught in so many words, or in a way that shall effect the same thing, to look to Jesus; to believe the gospel concerning Jesus, to expect his all in him, and to venture his soul upon him. All things under the law had respect unto this lamb of God, every divinely taught Israelite looked through the shadow of rites and ceremonies to this substance; and the offering of faith was only accepted, it being *impossible without faith to please him.*

Again, this young man lacked, what we all by nature lack, and which if by grace we become not possessed of, we can neither be happy here, nor hereafter, even an union with Christ. *I am the vine, ye are the branches,* said our Lord to his disciples,

ciples, and if any man be not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered. Our souls are by nature, dead in trespasses and sins, and with him alone is the well of life. As all light and heat come from the sun, so all divine and spiritual life is derived from Jesus Christ; for as the father hath life in himself, so hath he given the son to have life in himself, and that he may give eternal life to whomsoever he will. The great teacher of the gentile world sets it forth as a privilege peculiar to the people of God, that they are one with Jesus; we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; but where this union is wanting, men are like trees planted on a dry and barren mountain, which lacking moisture, produce no fruit; but wither, droop, and die. Ye are, says the apostle again, dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye might be married to another, even to him that is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God; where we see all the virtue, all the power of bringing forth fruit to God, is in consequence of our union with him; for says he, without me ye can do nothing. Nor shall we ever perform any religious work as we ought, until we perform it from a principle of love; true faith works by love, and love must be at the root of every pious exercise, or it will want a proper favour to render it acceptable. Religion in every branch is like the rites and ceremonies of the jews; a burthen which we can never be able to bear, if love does not smooth, soften, and give a pleasing relish thereto, and all bodily exercise, all formality but as a stinking, lothsome carcase, if love do not animate each duty, and circulate through the whole devotional system, as the blood

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animates, runs through, and administers proper warmth and nourishment to the natural body. I might appeal for the truth of this assertion to every unrenowned person in this congregation; what pleasure and satisfaction have you in prayer, either public or private? May I not answer for some of you, "so little, that in private we never bow the knee at all; and when we do it in public, it is more in compliance with custom, and from some notions of duty, than pleasure or delight." May I not add the suffrage of my brethren, who will readily confess, that in times past they had no delight in God's ways, but like the people of old influenced by the same spirit, were not wanting to say, *when will the sabbath be ended that we may buy and sell, and set forth wheat*; but now blessed be God the tables are turned, you are desiring an eternal sabbath; you wish for ever like Mary to sit at the master's feet; you sit down *under his shadow with heart-felt delight, and his fruit is sweet unto your taste*. O happy change! Inconceivably precious salvation! Now you can hail the sweet day of rest that saw the Lord arise; you now say with the pious prince of the chosen tribes, *I was glad when they said, let us go up to the house of the Lord*.

Once more, this young gentleman no doubt when he applied to our Lord, wore a garment suited to his rank and dignity, and by which it is not improbable he was known to be a ruler, or magistrate; but had he known himself, he would have seen the nakedness of his precious soul, and that a garment was *lacking* for this, which his possessions could not purchase. Every man as Job observes comes naked into the world, and the naked-

nakedness of his body is but a sad emblem of the naked soul; which void and destitute of the image of God, renders him unfit for an union with him, and cuts him off from the enjoyment of him. We can never be acceptable to God, but as we are found righteous, for he is a holy and sin-hating God; it might have been said therefore to this young man, thou *lackest* a righteousness pure, and spotless as the law of God, a righteousness answering all its large requirements, and possessed of which, justice itself in perfect correspondence with the holy law, may award eternal life as thy portion.

Except your righteousness, said Christ, exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God; they boasted in their own holiness, and despised others; but yet their righteousness was impure in the quality, and imperfect in the quantity thereof. It was impure in the quality, for it did not proceed from faith in Jesus Christ, and whatever is not of faith is sin; neither did the love of God, intermixing with, and running through each duty, render it as the sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour. It was imperfect in quantity, not like David having respect unto all his commandments; but tything, mint, cummin and anise, yet neglecting mercy and judgment. Their righteousness was well shadowed forth by Aaron's vestment, which only reached down to his knee, and probably intended to admonish the people of Israel, that by the righteousness of the law, no flesh could be justified. But the righteousness of Christ is a compleat covering for the naked sinner, is a glorious ornamental

namental robe for the believer ; and whosoever is not found in this, will have no place at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Blessed is the man, says David, *whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered ;* as nothing but the blood of Jesus could procure the former of these, namely forgiveness ; so nothing but the obedience, the active obedience, the holy life of Jesus, could effect the latter. His righteousness imputed to the believer, is that which procures him admission into the presence of the king of kings ; and gives him with boldness to stand before the Lord *Jehovah*. This righteousness therefore is what every natural man lacks, and without which, should he mistakenly boast like our young ruler, *all these things have I kept from my youth up*, he would still appear in the eyes of God like him to be but a specious hypocrite. Glorious robe ! This is fit for them that dwell in king's houses ; this is that which every believer in Jesus triumphs in, and says, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength* ; this is the royal-robe which is appointed for the king's daughter to wear, the spouse of Jesus when she shall be presented to the king, *her cloathing shall be of wrought gold*.

All these gifts, qualifications, blessings, the young man lacked, when alas, he seemed to think that he had need of nothing ; and all these are wanting to you who have not yet been brought as poor sinners to the feet of Jesus, to receive the blessings from his bounty.

You are in want of a renewed heart, from whence may proceed a reformed life, and renewed actions ; you want faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,

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Christ, without which it is impossible to please God. You want an union with the head of influence, that you may receive that disposition, and power, whereby to perform an acceptable service; yea you want that righteousness, which may cloath that beautiful robe which may adorn your naked souls, and fit you for those heavenly mansions he is gone to prepare. And now the third and grand point of enquiry is, how may these be obtained? Are they hereditary blessings, devolving by a natural descent upon the children. The scripture says, *no; not to them that were born of blood*; but of God. We are all born children of wrath, says the apostle, and another, *I was conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity*; but none are born children of grace. Believing parents do not beget believing children in ordinary generation; nor do parents the most pious and holy, beget children of a more graceful disposition than the most abandoned and notoriously wicked. Are they of the *will of man*? No, the tender and indulgent parent may treasure up for the darling of his heart thousands of gold and silver, and a corruptible inheritance; but he cannot bequeath any spiritual blessing; it is in this respect that no one has oil to give to another. The pious parent will use all possible means, to promote the eternal welfare of his offspring; he will consider it as a duty incumbent upon him, to reprove, exhort, admonish, counsel, &c. yea, he will go before his children, and servants in the way of duty, and add to precept and example, constant prayer; but after all must subscribe the apostolic declaration, *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God must give the increase*. We parents, may
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like the father of the fallen race, beget in our likeness, fallen, depraved creatures; but God only, the father of a perfect race can remake and transform us into his own blessed image.

Cannot these blessings so necessary to bring to heaven, be discovered by learning and found out, and obtained by much knowledge? No, if any man would be wise to salvation he must become a fool that he may be wise; for *God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world*, nor hath any man by wisdom found out God. Was the preaching of the cross in the days of Paul the apostle foolishness to the wise? Yes, and either that preaching of the cross must lose its native simplicity, or it will meet with no better treatment in any age, nor with a more favourable reception at any place. The rich and the poor, the wise and the unwise are all upon a level in the sight of God; *with him there is no respect of persons, as he has no pleasure in the strength of an horse, neither delighteth he in the legs of a man*; so the blooming youth, and the hoary head, the enthroned monarch, and the shackled slave, are equally regarded by him; and in respect to his supreme and sovereign majesty are very vanity and less than nothing. The prophet in order to humble the haughtiness of man, and ascribe all our salvation to God alone, delivers himself in these words; “the vision of
“all is become unto you as the words of a book
“that is sealed, which men deliver to one that
“is learned, saying, read this I pray thee; and
“he saith I cannot for it is sealed. And the
“book is delivered to him that is not learned,
“saying, read this I pray thee; and he saith, I
“am not learned.”

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Thus is the book of God, a sealed book, and none but the lion of the tribe of Judah can open the seals, teach true wisdom, and put a sinner into the possession of these transcendent blessings. As the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, so the blessings we are enquiring after are not to the worldly wise; for thus it is written, saith the great preacher to the corinthians, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent*; and then in a kind of holy triumph cries out, *where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world?* What is worldly wisdom when employed to find out God, and the things of God, if they are not revealed unto us by his spirit? The Lord Jesus on this account said, *I thank thee, O father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* I speak not these things to depreciate learning, but to circumscribe it's latitude; it may be greatly useful when properly employed, and in it's own sphere; but Hagar must not take upon her, what properly belongs to Sarah; human pride must not attempt to perform a task, which sovereign wisdom claims a sole title to.

But has the man of wealth and abundance no prerogative, cannot these blessings be procured for money? No, sooner may dung and dross pay an equivalent for the most immense sums of gold and jewels; riches, though blessings in themselves, and for which the possessor must be accountable, as a talent given for improvement; yet are so far from helping a man forward in the way to heaven, that they too commonly pinion his heart and affections

fections fast down to earth. The text before us affords an awful proof of this; the young man either had really or feignedly a desire to obtain eternal life, but that, *sell all thou hast and give to the poor*, discovered and laid open his strong and indissoluble attachment to the life that perisheth; and this led our Saviour to make the following observation, *how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God*. As the salvation of any man is a miracle of grace and mercy; so in the salvation of a rich man the prodigy is greater; the snares, temptations, allurements, and obstructions of various kinds that stand in the way of the rich, speaking after the manner of men, make their salvation impossible; *but with God all things are possible*. Therefore although in the language of the apostle, "not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called," yet in the judgment of charity, some of all these are called; for *salvation belongeth to the Lord, and we are saved by grace*.

But will good works avail nothing to the obtaining these blessings? Good works will lose nothing of their just weight, in the ballance of the sanctuary; but who can produce good works from bad principles? *Make the tree good, and it's fruit will be good*; but to talk of good works in order to obtain a good heart, is like talking of making a good tree from the bad fruit produced by it. What good works can be expected from that man, who as to all spiritual exercises is *without strength*? The apostle does not say weak; for a weak man performs something not exceeding the measure of his strength; but (*asthenon*) having *no strength*, therefore utterly incapable of performing any act, to lift

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lift a feather, or remove a mountain. Besides, to make a work good, there must first be a good intention; or in other words, every gracious act (and none else can be pleasing to God) must proceed from a gracious principle; but every cause must be prior to the caused; therefore a good heart to a good life; or a renewed heart to a renewed life.

Furthermore, my friends, when you talk of good works, what conceptions have you of the law of God? You ought to consider it as a touchstone by which the quality of metal, gold, silver, &c. is to be tried; and if your good works are not free from all adulteration of pride, self, and every imperfection, though you may commend their currency and attempt to pass them as genuine; yet will the Lord esteem them as *reprobate silver*, and reject them as dross. Again, you ought to consider the law of God as a perfect balance, in which, all your works are to be strictly weighed; and if there be any thing short of a perfect love to God, producing perfect obedience in every step in life; the dreadful writing will appear against you, as it did against the impious Belshazzar, *thou art weighed in the ballance, and art wanting*.

Moreover, could you produce an obedience in full tale, adequate to the utmost standard of the holy law, this would be no more than your bounden duty, and you would still have cause to say, *we are unprofitable servants*; nor could such obedience persevered in to the end, make atonement for your past transgressions; but you must still enquire, *What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?*

But it may be enquired again, cannot the preachers

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ers of God's word convey these blessings ? No, they can only like John the baptist, point out unto you the great and glorious person whose prerogative it solely is to confer them ; saying with him, *he is greater than I* ; or in the words of Peter, *to this man, this JESUS give all the prophets witness ; nor is there salvation in any other.* The most eminent ministers of Jesus Christ, are no more (in respect to their office) than *ambassadors of Christ*, to whom it is given to treat with sinners, to publish the sovereign edict of their prince, and preach in pursuance of their commission, the *unsearchable riches of Christ*. In other respects they can do nothing for you, save that in common with all that love the souls of men, present you at the throne of grace in their continual supplications to God. *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water*, but it is *God must give the blessing of increase* ; the Lord sends by whom he will, and what he will he accomplishes by the message they bear ; for he is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another.

Suffer me just to add in a few words before I dismiss this particular, that there is one thing which a minister of Jesus Christ can do, and it is that kind office which I cordially would perform to you. When the foolish virgins found their mistake, in not having prepared oil for their lamps, the wise said unto them, *go to them that sell and buy*, but gave them no particular directions where to be supplied ; but my design is to inform you where you may be supplied at the best hand, as we commonly say ; Jesus Christ that despised Nazarene, that (Talui) that hanged man as the Jews were wont in derision to call him ; he has all these
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blessings to dispose of, and that on the best terms. *Go and buy*, said the wise virgins, but I say go and beg; Jesus is a bountiful giver, he has a full house, and an open heart; *he fills the hungry with good things*, or if ye will go and buy, let it be *without money, and without price*. Do any of you want a renewed heart, that you may be delivered from ignorance, darkness, enmity, &c. I, says the Lord, *will take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh*; his liberal hand bestows his blessings freely, and in abundance; his character is, that he "gives liberally to all," this is marvellously true in the works of nature, and the blessings of providence; he gives *wisdom*, spiritual, heavenly, and every good thing in Christ Jesus; and this is gloriously true in respect of all that call upon him. *When the poor and needy seek water* from the Lord; when as poor sinners they apply to him for pardon and happiness; the barren rocks shall issue streams of consolation, and the parched desert become an Eden, rather than these shall be deprived of the blessings they want. Sinners want to do something for acceptance, whereas God bestows his blessings freely; and never yet did a sinner come to Jesus to obtain these blessings from him, that wanted wealth to buy them; many are too rich, but none are too poor for our glorious Redeemer to take in. "I have been so monstrously wicked says the sinner, and my heart is so deceitful, that I am at present quite unfit to come to Christ; I can have no ground of hope for acceptance, 'till I can be a little better;" Jesus accepts us not for our worthiness sake, but takes poor sinners under his care, that he may make them saints; and render

them worthy of a place in his kingdom; for “it
 “is not by works of righteousness that we have
 “done, but according to his mercy he saved us,
 “by the washing of regeneration, and the renew-
 “ing of the Holy Ghost.”

In a word, “Salvation belongeth unto the
 “Lord; with him there is mercy, and plenteous
 “redemption;” and he that gives his people the
 blessings of the *neither and the upper springs*; has
 his heart disposed, and his hand stretched forth to
 supply the wants of every poor sinner, that naked,
 and destitute seeks him in his son, for *whosoever*
cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

It is now time to lead your attention to the fourth
 thing proposed, that is, how it will appear that
 a man possesses these blessings; and in the discus-
 sion of this particular, I shall deliver my senti-
 ments to you in the following particulars:

1st, A renewed heart will produce a similar life;
 for as a *corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit*,
 neither will a good tree bring forth bad fruit. As
 it is possible that a man who is a stranger to God,
 and his renovating grace, may do many things,
 (like Herod who heard John preach, and was
 seemingly affected,) which have the appearance,
 and shew of good; so it is possible the believer
 may do some things which in the eyes of a cen-
 sorious world, may be reputed evil; yet these vari-
 ous actions, as they proceed from such very different
 principles, must be equally different in their na-
 ture. A child of God may sometimes do things
 which he has much reason to be ashamed of, which
 neither tend to promote the happiness of his own
 soul, to strengthen his brethren, or bring glory
 to his God; yet as all such actions proceed from
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the remains of unsubdued nature, they become the plague of his heart and bring sorrow to his mind; and constrain him to confess in the language of the apostle, *the thing I do I allow not; and there is therefore no condemnation to him, who being in Christ Jesus, walks not; his conversation is not after the flesh, but after the spirit.* When a man is really born of God, and partakes of true grace, *the desires of his heart are to God, and to the remembrance of him;* he does many things for God, endeavours to do more, and desires to do all; for notwithstanding all the remains of corruption, which oftentimes bow down his soul and almost break his heart; yet his principal end and aim in all his conversation is, *to glorify God with his body and spirit which are his.*

2d. Whatever person believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, such an one will regard Christ above all things; for he finds him to be the very life of his soul, and the spring of all his comfort. The true believer, as said before, desires to do all things that may please God, and has *respect unto all his commandments;* yet he has no dependance on his duties, “which, says, *be could I perform in the best, and most perfect manner, I should after all be an unprofitable servant; nor are these my Saviour.*” He looks to Christ as his great deliverer, by the shedding of whose precious blood he has been preserved from *going down into the pit;* and ascribes to the free grace of God abounding through him, the whole of his salvation; he acknowledges himself to have been saved freely, by grace, and *not by works of righteousness which he has done.* His dependance is still upon Christ, that as he has been the author, so

he may be the finisher of the gracious work begun; he finds himself weak, and unable to resist the enemies of his soul, therefore his eyes are *to the everlasting hills, because from thence comes all his strength*; it is true, says he, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I live in the flesh is by faith in the son of God*. If he has been preserved and kept from falling into practices dishonourable to his vocation, and unbecoming his profession, he gives all the glory of his preservation to Jesus Christ; for true faith is a self-emptying, and a soul-humbling thing, and will as naturally ascribe both it's own existence, and all it's fruits and effects to Jesus, as a spark of fire by it's natural and free ascent owns and acknowledges it's parent sun. Or if having through unwatchfulness and neglect, fallen into sin; he sees no help or succour for him but in Christ, *in returning and rest is all his safety*; he conceives of no healing but by the blood of the Lamb, nor ever thinks of any refuge but under the shadow of this rock, for to whom shall I go, says he, *thou hast the words of eternal life*.

Although professing persons may express themselves incautiously and unscripturally; yet every true believer will acknowledge his help and salvation to be in Christ; and that Christ's faithfulness not his own, is the cause, the sole and glorious cause of his preservation, and perseverance in the faith of the gospel.

3d. Whenever a soul is united to Christ in consequence of faith and a new-nature, a conformity to Christ in heart and life will ensue; no one can know so much of the transcendant excellency of the adorable Redeemer, or the matchless beauty

ty of the bridegroom of his church, as they who see him by the light of his own spirit, see him by an eye of faith, and taste his sweetness by an union with him : and none can love him but those who know him ; and such as know him most will always love him best. Religion is always most amiable in itself, most easy to the professor, and most acceptable to God, when it is carried in the chariot whose *pavement is love* ; therefore he that loves most will obey best, *if a man love me he will keep my words*. The word of God will be most esteemed by those that love God most ; and it is no insignificant proof of our love to God, that we have a real respect, and value for his word. Holy David, than whom few of the first-rate saints appear to have had more fervency of spirit, seems to have had a proportionably superior respect for the scriptures : *thy word is dearer unto me than thousands of gold and silver*, and again, *how sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea sweeter than honey to my mouth* ; and describing one who is renewed by grace, says, *his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night*. In short, to every one *that believeth, Christ is precious*, his word and *promises are precious*, and his very *name is like ointment poured forth*. The people of God are held in high esteem by a true lover of Christ, these are his *friends, which are nearer to him, than a brother* ; and his delight is in the saints and in such as excel in virtue. Brotherly love is a natural branch of divine faith, and a vital union with Christ, for this commandment we have received from him, that he that loveth God, love his brother also.

4th, As the righteousness of Christ imputed, is
a pri-

a privilege peculiar to every believer, so the faithful in consequence thereof, obtain a good degree of boldness when brought to the test of God's most holy law; for in *this*, the largest requirements thereof are fully answered; Jesus by his active and passive obedience, *has magnified the law and made it honourable*; this exact and consummate obedience, he paid as the surety of believing sinners; therefore they in him are accepted as perfectly righteous, being made *the righteousness of God in him*.

The believer glories not in any thing but this, that the Lord is now his husband; that he lives in him, by him, and through him; he glories in his name, *the LORD our righteousness*; he glories in his work, *thou Lord hast wrought all our works in us*, and he glories in the donation of himself to God, saying, *I am the Lord's*; others indeed have too long had the dominion over me, but *I am thine*. Thus it will appear that a man possesses those blessings the young ruler lacked, when humbled in his own eyes he gives all the glory of what he is, has, and hopes to be, to God alone; when his lips and life speak the same language, the language of Canaan, and while a sojourner on earth, he has his conversation in heaven, and his *fellowship with the father, and with his son Jesus Christ*. The blessedness of such a state, is too great for language to describe, or heart conceive; which I think will appear when in the last place I lay before you in a few instances wherein it doth consist.

1st, It is said, "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death"

“ death that is the devil, and deliver them who
 “ through the fear of death were all their life-
 “ time subject to bondage.” Now to be saved
 from the fear of death, is a blessing not to be pur-
 chased at any price ; is a freedom which a man
 cannot obtain, although he would give all the
 treasures of his house to compass it. They best
 know the greatness of this blessing, who have
 known the terrors of an accusing conscience, and
 the sore chastisement of a *wounded spirit* ; *the*
sing of death is sin, and when the common enemy
 attacks a poor sinner armed with this dart, what
 inconceivable anguish seizes upon the soul ! Such
 a one feels what is insupportable, and sinks beneath
 a distressing fear of worse ; his frightened imagina-
 tion, now fruitful in every kind of terror, scales
 the dreaded tribunal of the righteous judge, and
 seems to hear the irrevocable sentence pronounced,
depart thou cursed into everlasting fire, and seems
 to feel in fearful expectation the fierceness of those
 flames which never shall be quenched. Now to
 be delivered from all this weight of woe, and to
 experience what the apostle calls *victory*, *given*
us through our Lord Jesus Christ ; must be a state
 of blessedness which every one that thinks at all,
 must wish to partake of ; but which none can pos-
 sess but in and through the mediator.

2d, Where there is a heart renewed by grace,
 and an union with Christ, there is a comfortable
 sense of his forgiving love ; and the believer can
 now in the words of the prophet, say, “ O Lord
 “ I will praise thee, for though thou wast angry
 “ with me, thine anger is turned away and thou
 “ dost comfort me.” This state yields abundance
 of peace, spiritual peace, such as a *stranger inter-*
medleth

medleth not with, such as passeth all understanding ; for now the dark providences of God are light about him : “ light is sown for the righteous, and “ gladness for the upright in heart ;” and the barren rocks and parched desarts pour out unto him, full streams of living water. He has now received *the blessing of pardon from the Lord*, and therefore has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ; *and righteousness from the God of his salvation, and can now come with boldness to the throne of grace.* His comforts and delights are of a spiritual nature, nor depend upon the mutables and uncertainties of perishable things ; but flow from a pure, unchangeable, and inexhaustible spring ; the joy of the believer *is unspeakable, and full of glory* ; he is delivered from tormenting, condemning fear, for “ he hath not received the “ spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of “ adoption,” and *the joy of the Lord is his strength.* If at any time his joys are eclipsed by some intervening cloud, so that heaviness comes upon his soul, and causes his comforts to ebb ; yet the heavenly wind, the blessed spirit of God dissipates and scatters it here and there, and the refreshing rays of the uncreated brightness again make glad the heart ; such “ heaviness may endure for a “ night, but joy cometh in the morning.” The joys and satisfactions of an hypocrite are but like the crackling of thorns, but these things saith Christ have I spoken unto you, *that your joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

We may add to all the happiness peculiar to this state in the present life and for the present time ; that lively soul-animating hope, of greater, and more substantial felicity to be enjoyed here-
after ;

after ; for “ eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard,
 “ nor hath it entered into the heart of man to
 “ conceive what God has prepared for those that
 “ wait for him.” The believer’s hope is said to
 be *full of immortality*, that is, nothing less than a
 glorious never-ending life, spent in the sweet frui-
 tion of God, is the object of his wishes, and that
 on which his heart and eyes are fixed ; he is said
 to be “ looking for that blessed hope, and the
 “ glorious appearing of the great God, even our
 “ Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The hope of the believer is called a *lively hope* ;
 intimating that it influences the soul, and excites
 to exercises of vital holiness ; and leaves not the
 possessor in a state of spiritual death while he pro-
 fesses yet to live ; but representing to his view,
 the glories of the invisible world, and like He-
 zekiah shewing him the treasure house of the Re-
 deemer, &c. he is hereby led on to the practice
 of holiness, and expecting to see Jesus “ as he
 “ is, to purify himself as he is pure.” The ob-
 ject of this hope is, “ an inheritance, incorrupti-
 “ ble, undefiled, and that fadeth not away,” and
 infinitely transcends in worth and excellency all
 this world can boast ; and when compared with
 which, sink in the estimation, and dwindles into
 nothing and vanity.

And yet once more, O comfortable thought !
 All this blessedness the believer enjoys in the pre-
 sent life, is but a prelude to, a forestate of, that
 “ exceeding and eternal weight of glory,” re-
 served for him in heaven. In this frail state so
 full of imperfection are we in our renewed con-
 dition, that the strongest faith has it’s ebbs and
 flows in the joyous sensations it affords ; but the
 beatific

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beatific vision will be subject to no such mutations and fluctuations; "at God's right hand there are pleasures for evermore." No more complaining of hard hearts, no remaining unbelief to darken the evidence, and distress the soul; no more clouds and darkness, fears, or distrusts; but an uninterrupted stream of living water will yield a full supply for the inhabitants of the *new Jerusalem*; perpetual access will be given them to the tree of life, with full liberty to take of it's delicious fruit, "whose leaves are said to be for the healing of the nations."

Upon the whole, if any of you should think yourselves like this young self-justiciary to be perfect and lacking nothing; there is much cause to fear you like him are in want of all things. What say you? Because you are no drunkards, swearers, or sabbath-breakers, do ye imagine ye are in need of nothing? Because you do not spend your evenings at the play-house, or at the card-table, that you lack nothing to recommend you to the divine favour? Will a form of religion pass with God for vital christianity? No, every specious hypocrite must be ashamed of his hypocrisy either here or hereafter; and the formal professor must be taught that without the saving knowledge of God in Christ Jesus he will be rejected with an *I know ye not*. You see in the instance of this young man, how our hearts may deceive us; so that when we are ready to conclude concerning ourselves that all is well with us, and we are in lack of nothing; yet in reality, and in the eyes of him that thoroughly understands us, we are in want of all things. What need there is therefore of self examination, and instead of saying in a vain

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vain confidence, *what lack I yet?* How much rather should we come to Jesus in the words of king Hezekiah, (acknowledging our poverty and distress,) *Lord undertake for me.* Untill Christ by his spirit is formed in your hearts, you are in want of all things; you want the *primum mobile*, “without faith it is impossible to please God,” and all your works not enlivened by the spirit of God, are but a dead carcase, odious and detestible in the eyes of a pure, holy, and sin-hating God.

To conclude, “If Christ be in you the hope of glory, if Christ dwells in your hearts by faith, what do ye lack?” In him “ye are complete,” in him “ye have righteousness and strength. All is yours, when ye are Christ’s, and Christ is Gods.” What remains for you, but to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, “denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Gird up, my brethren, the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” You need not be afraid to sell all that you have, whose portion the Lord is; for all your wants shall be more than supplied from his abundant fulness. “Set your affection on things above, let your conversation be in heaven, let your lights so shine before men, that they seeing your good works may glorify your father which is in heaven; for the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

F I N I S.

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THE

A
TREATISE
ON THE
IMPUTATION of SIN,
AND OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS.

As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Rom. v. 12.

All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Is. liii. 6.

David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. Rom. iv. 6.

LEEDS:

Printed by GRIFFITH WRIGHT.

THE ATLAS

ON THE

IMMUTATION OF SIN

AND OF

RIGHTHOUSNESS.



It is one man, for the world, and death by
the blood of Christ, for the world, and death by

All we this great power of God, and the 1. and 2.
and on the right of the 1. and 2. and 3.

David says, that the 1. and 2. of the right of the 1. and 2.
and on the right of the 1. and 2. and 3.

1844

Printed by CHRISTIAN WRIGHT.



T H E
P R E F A C E.

I PRETEND not to set the subject of the following sheets in so strong and clear a light, as that persons who are disposed to cavil, may not censure several things as being obscure, incorrect, injudicious, &c. &c. seeing no writer, sacred or profane, has ever yet been so happy as to escape the censure of some, who have conceived of, and viewed things in a light different from himself. And should the charge of obscurity, &c. lie ever so full against me, and that in the judgment of the most candid and judicious ; I pretend neither to infallibility, nor the deepest penetration ; I judge according to the strength of the evidence I have, and speak and write according to my judgment ; I may mistake, and who is infallible. Few or none are bold enough to deny this awful truth, that they are sinners ; though it must be acknowledged too few seem sensible of the evil of sin, and the dangerous condition they are brought into by it ; but forasmuch as we are thereby liable to be lost, and eternally ruined, it certainly becomes (at least every thinking person) seriously to enquire into the means of deliverance, and restoration to the forfeited favour of his maker.

a

ker. I presume every man finds in himself a strong propensity to evil, and the best of men, have cause to complain that it is too often, and too much present with them. Whether this proneness to evil, is owing to some default in our nature, and may be considered as a corrupt stream issuing from a poisoned fountain; or the effect of habit and evil custom, is a point that ever has, and yet must remain undetermined, if we attend not to the word of God, as the best and surest guide to truth. In this persuasion therefore, that the book of God is the book of truth, and that we are taught therein the otherwise inexorable mysteries of salvation; I have principally had an eye unto it, in order to conceive aright of sin's nature and malignity, the manner of our deliverance from it, and the means of our reconciliation, and restoration to the divine favour. The brief account following of the imputation of sin and of righteousness, is not so much intended as an answer to any thing that has been wrote or published on the subject, as a plain scriptural account of the reason and manner of our becoming guilty (*or being constituted sinners,*) by Adam, and our being made, (*or constituted righteous*) by Christ. Rom. v. 19. and I doubt not, but the subject has so strong a foundation in the holy scriptures, as to be capable of receiving much greater light and confirmation by some abler pen.

I hope the reader will excuse me for throwing a few lines into the margin of some pages, by way of illustration of some scriptures, and to confirm my own sentiments by the authority of a few noted writers; this appearing to me more eligible, than to interrupt the thread of discourse,
or

P R E F A C E.

or break into an argument. However this subject may be handled by any writer, or regarded by those who read thereof, it is certainly in itself very important and interesting; to know that we are sinners, and bear a conviction in our bosom of our lost and ruined state thereby, is absolutely necessary in order to bring us to Christ, *for the whole need not a physician, and there is no other name besides that of Jesus Christ given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved.* And how joyful the sound of the gospel is, and how beautiful upon the mountains the feet of those who publish it are, a poor Magdalene, or a trembling, frightened jailor can best tell; but *happy are the people that know the joyful sound.*

If what the following sheets contain on this subject, shall through a divine blessing be made useful to any who read them, for instruction or edification; the end and design of writing and publishing them will be answered. If the reader is brought more low and humble in his own eyes, led to depend on Christ as his only Saviour, to value above all things his blood and righteousness, I doubt not but he will enjoy a happiness while here on earth, which *a stranger intermeddleth not with*, which a stranger to himself and the Lord Christ is neither capable of receiving, nor has any relish for; and being found at last “having on that righteousness which is of God by faith,” will appear with boldness in the presence of God, and be “accepted in and through the beloved.”

HALIFAX, May 16, 1766.

Titus Knight.



TREATISE, &c.

CHAPTER I.

IMpute, in the holy scripture, is, 1st, To charge to a person's account his own facts, good or bad; *he that bringeth not an offering unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord, blood shall be imputed unto that man, Levit. xvii. 4. and the zeal of Phineas, was imputed to him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore, Ps. cvi. 31.* In the former of these instances, disobedience and wickedness (in the hebraism blood) is said to be imputed to the offender; in the latter, pious zeal is said to be imputed to the priest of the Lord, for righteousness. Or 2d, To charge to the account of one person the good or bad actions of another, so that he to whose account such actions are placed becomes interested in their consequences good, or bad. So the wickedness of Achan, who transgressed in the *accursed thing*, was so imputed

to his whole family as to involve them in the same ruin and destruction with himself. Josh. vii. 24. And God promised to be with, to bless and multiply the seed of Isaac *for Abraham's sake*, Gen. xxvi. 24.

Moreover, to impute is used, 1st, either in an evil sense; as when some bad action is ascribed to a person as done by him, and for which he is esteemed culpable, tho' innocent, as was the case of Ahimelech the priest who being accused of abetting David in the supposed conspiracy against his royal master, said, *let not the king impute any thing to his servant*, 1 Sam. xxii. 15. Or 2d, in a good sense. Either 1st, when the guilt of some bad action, is not ascribed or imputed to the offender for any reason, as Shemei besought David, *let not my Lord impute iniquity unto me*, 2 Sam. xix. 19. or as David describes the man *blessed to whom the Lord will not impute sin*, Ps. xxxii. 2d. Or 2d, when the benefit and effect of some laudable action, is ascribed to him that merited it not, for reasons without, and apart from him; such is the case of him, *to whom God imputeth righteousness without works*, Rom. iv. 6.

2d, This act of imputation tho' differently expressed in the english translation of the bible, yet bears the same import; and in the original tongues both of the old and new testament, is mostly expressed by one and the same word. In these passages of the old testament, we read *accounted*, Deut. ii. 11. 20. 1 Kings x. 21. Is. ii. 22. In these and such like, we read *reckoned*. Numb. xviii. 27. 23. 9. Ps. xl. 5. *thy thoughts, imputations, &c.* And in these we read, *imputed*, Levit. vii. 18. 17. 4. &c. Yet in all the above places under the different expressions,
accounted,

accounted, reckoned, imputed, we have one and the same original hebrew word (*bbasbab.*) In the new testament likewise, we read *accounted, or counted*, Rom viii. 36. 1 Cor. iv. 1 Gal. iii. 6. and *reckoned*, Luke xxii. 37 Rom. iv. 4, 9, 10. Also in these and others *imputed*, Rom. iv. 11, 5, 13. James ii. 23, &c. In all which passages, tho' diversly rendered by the translators, yet we have the same original greek word (*logizomai*) in its varied forms. Hence we may observe, when God is said not to impute sin, it is in the amount to say, he does not reckon sin to such an one, or put sin to his account, that he should deal with him as a sinner. And on the contrary, when God is said to impute righteousness, it is nothing less than to say, he reckons righteousness unto him, or puts it to his account, so that he looks upon him, and treats him as a righteous person, or as one possessor of righteousness. This act of imputation, or non-imputation is spoken of no less than eight times in the eleven first verses of the fourth chapter to the Romans; where, tho' differently expressed by the words counted, reckoned, and imputed, yet the sense is the same, and the greek work from whence they are rendered, is the same in all.

3d, The scripture holds forth the act of imputation, three different ways, that is, in respect to the subject thereof, and the persons concerned therein. As to the subject, it is *sin*, and *righteousness*. The persons concerned therein, are, Adam and his seed, and Christ and his seed. More particularly, 1st, The *imputation* of that one sin, in which Adam transgressed by eating the fruit of the interdicted tree, to all his posterity, of whom he was the representative, and federal head in the first

first covenant. 2d, The imputation of the sins of the elect to the Lord Jesus Christ, as their surety, and head of the second covenant. 3d, The imputation of the righteousness of Christ, *that is*, his active and passive obedience to all who believe in him.

Imputation in the first of these senses, is what we commonly call original sin; a doctrine maintained by the orthodox in all ages and places; and which has a sufficient foundation in the scriptures, as (I trust) will be manifested in the following chapter; but denied and rejected in whole or in part, formerly by Pelagius and his followers, and at present by the disciples of Arius, Socinius, and Arminius; under which three classes may be comprehended a great part of the *established churchmen*, and modern *dissenters*, who with one consent make their boast of a new *light*, and take to themselves accordingly the name of *new lights*. Nor are the people called *Methodists*, much more orthodox in this tenet, the leader of which sect affirms, in words to this amount, that all the evil brought on the posterity of Adam by his transgression in the garden is totally removed and taken away by Christ, so that none can be held obnoxious for his sin, much less be exposed to suffer on the account of it. Imputation in the second sense above-mentioned, respects Christ as the sinner's surety, *bearing their sins in his own body on the tree*, and suffering in their stead the demerit of their offences. This doctrine also, is denied and opposed by the *Arians*, *Socinians*, and *New-lights* of the present age; but is so well supported, and guarded by the sacred writers, that their writings themselves must be renounced e'er this truth

truth can be overturned. Some are so well aware of this, that trampling upon all the pretended authority of the bible, they treat the whole of it's contents as a cunning devised fable; and in so doing, while they attempt to weaken and invalidate the sacred text, do but the more corroborate and confirm it, by fulfilling the predictions of the inspired pen-men, 2 Pet. i. 16, 21. Imputation in the third sense, notwithstanding it has a good foundation in the word of God, as I hope to make evident; yet wants not opposers, even from those, who in many other respects seem to hold the truth as it is in Jesus.

4th, The common objection that lies against the first imputation is, that it carries an aspect of injustice in the divine being, in punishing the innocent offspring of a nocent parent; and of cruelty in dealing with harmless infants, as adult offenders. Hence the doctrine it respects altho' confirmed both by the *articles* and *homilies* of the church of England, and subscribed by the assembled divines at Westminster; yet is esteemed by many of the descendants of both, as *Augustini figmentum*, and disregarded as though it had no place in the writings of the apostles and prophets. The objection raised by the Socinians, New-lights, &c. against the second imputation is, that it is irrational and absurd, it being impossible to make a transfer of guilt from one subject to another; and because the whole doctrine of atonement lies out of the reach of natural conception, it is looked upon as absurd, and often treated with contempt. It is objected to the third imputation, either, 1st, That it is unscriptural, no mention being made by the apostle of any thing but *faith* being

being imputed for righteousness, or 2d, That it is a doctrine attended with very dangerous and pernicious consequences; as leading men to disregard all holiness in themselves, by fixing their attention on the holiness and righteousness of another. It is proposed to consider the truth of these doctrines, in a brief and familiar sort in the following chapters, with a special regard to the holy scriptures; and to touch upon the abovementioned objections in order to obviate and clear what seems difficult and obscure; and I shall endeavour at the same time to edify the reader, by leading him to some suitable reflection on each head, and to make some salutary uses of the whole.

CHAP. II.

C H A P. II.

GOD said, let us make man after our image, after our likeness. Gen. i. 26.

There is a fourfold image of God spoken of in the scriptures; the first is in reference to the Lord Christ who is called *the image of the invisible God*, Coloss. i. 15. The second respects Adam, who is said agreeable to the text cited above, to have been made *in the image of God*, ch. v. 1. The third is the regenerate, who are said to be *renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him*. Coloss. iii. 10. The fourth respects man in the relation of a husband, who is said to be *the image and glory of God*, in the relation he bears to his wife, and *she the glory of the man*. 1 Cor. xi. 7. Jesus Christ the son of God, is the essential image of God, being one with, and perfectly equal to the father. Adam was what some have called the accidental image, whose likeness and similitude, was unequal and imperfect, as to his nature, state, and qualifications. The regenerate bear the spiritual image of God, as they are endued with supernatural gifts and graces. And a husband is the authoritative image, in respect of the power given him over his wife.

2d, We may not think the image of God in which Adam was made consisted in a participation of the divine nature, or that man was by nature

apost-

apokiasation, or shadow of the divine, or as the heathens used to say, *divina aure quædam particula*; for to bear the divine image in this eminent degree, is the sole prerogative of Christ, who is the essential and natural image of the invisible God, in such sort as is impossible for man to rise unto, seeing a finite creature cannot possibly partake of infinitude. We are indeed said *to be made partakers of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4, but this is not to be understood of an *essential, formal, and intrinsic* participation; but analogical, accidental, and extrinsical, by reason of those holy tempers, and effects, analogous to the divine nature produced in us by the agency, and gracious operations of the holy spirit, agreeable to which, we are said to be conformed to the image of God.

3d, Nor did the image of God in which Adam was created consist in some particular form of body, as was the opinion of old of the *Antropomorphites*, who supposed that God was in the shape and figure of man; we cannot but acknowledge, that as man was appointed lord of this lower world, there is something noble, and majestic in the form and texture of his body; that as it was intended to be the receptacle of a soul, so vastly superior to, and so essentially distinct from the inferior creation, so the organized body should be different in it's form, and properly disposed to serve the ends and purposes of the better part.* Nor do the holy

scrip-

The heathen poet has elegantly set forth the stateliness and resplendence of man,

Pronaque cum spectent animalia cætera terram,
Os homini sublime dedit, celumque tueri
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.

scriptures intend to teach us that God has parts and passions, &c. like man, for whenever human members are attributed to the divine being, it is only by *anthropopeia*, and not to be understood properly and formally, but figuratively, and analogically.

4th, The image of God in which Adam was created, consisted especially in three things; 1st, *nature*, 2d, the *rectitude of nature*, 3d, in a *state of happiness*, which was founded on, and flowed from both the former. 1st, From his *nature*, as to the spirituality, and immortality of the soul, 2d, From the *rectitude of nature*, which consisted in original righteousness; and from hence he was invested with power and dominion to rule the lower parts of the creation. The first part of this image pertained to the substance of the soul, viz. spirituality, immortality, and incorruptibility; as also to its faculties, the *understanding*, and freedom of *will*; which things eminently and most perfectly agree to God. Whence man, even after he had fallen by sin, and defaced the image of God in other respects, yet is observed to retain it in this, James iii. 9. And Gen. ix. 6. homicide is prohibited for this special reason, because man was made in the image of God. The second part of this image pertains to the *rectitude of nature*, which is usually called *original righteousness*, because, man was perfectly righteous when created, and first coming from the hand of the alwise artist. This *original righteousness*, in which Adam was created, must comprehend in it, a clear *understanding*, a holy *will*, and perfect rectitude in the *affections*, and such harmony, and regularity subsisted throughout the whole man, that the *members* of the body were

were subservient to the *affections*, the *affections* to the *will*, and the *will* to the leading and directing faculty *reason*.

Man thus formed upright and innocent was pleasing in the eye of his maker, for "God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good," Gen. i. 31. But ah! what ruin, what waste, what devastation hath sin brought into the world in general, and into this *microcosm*, man, in particular! More than egyptian darkness hath covered the *understanding*, perverseness and rebellion instigate the *will*, and the *affections*, like the untameable rabble of a giddy crowd, run headlong on, and throw off all restraint. As when there was no king in *Israel* every man did that which was right in his own eyes, so it is in the soul of a lapsed sinner; his state is an *anarchy* none bears rule, none submits, all rule and none obey. Furious passions break thro' all that opposes, and insatiable, and ungovernable desire, hurries the man preposterously on, and never says it is enough. Wretched man in this his fallen condition, tho' made to govern others, is unable to govern himself, and refuses subjection to the righteous law of his maker, for whose glory he was chiefly made, and to whom obedience was not only a debt the creature owed, but whose happiness also was inseparably connected therewith, and consisted in the discharge of. Thus "man, continued not in honour," but became like unto the beasts that perish.

5th, Socinus and his followers, have generally opposed this part of Adam's image, in order to overthrow the whole doctrine of original sin. Socinus himself acknowledges that man in his first crea-

creation had not that corruption of nature which is in man's nature now; but denies that there was that *wisdom, holiness, and rectitude*, we speak of, free from rebellion and dissention, of appetite and reason. So that the image of God he and his followers place solely in the dominion given to Adam. But the scripture makes it manifest, that Adam was created in *righteousness* and true holiness. 1st, Adam was created *right and good*; "God saw the things which he had made, and they were all good, very good." Gen. i. 31 also, "God made man (*haadam*) upright, but he hath sought out many inventions," Eccle. vii. 29. This goodness God approves must necessarily respect the moral rectitude of his soul, without which, as he could not be disposed duly to serve God, and hereby answer the prime end of his creation, so neither could his divine and holy maker possibly have been pleased with him. That uprightness in which God created Adam, as it stands opposed in the text to the vain reasonings, and inventions of men, now fallen, must needs be understood of the perfect state in which man was created. Again, such as the image is, which is restored to us by grace, and will be perfected in us by glory; such it behoved that to be, which man was a partaker of by nature; because the revocation is made *juxta imaginem creatoris. i. e. to the image of him that created*, Coloss. iii. 10. which image consists in the illumination of the mind, and the sanctification of the will; whence we are said, to be "transformed, by the renewing of our mind," Rom. xii. 2. and "to be renewed in knowledge," to be conformed to God in *righteousness and true holiness* or in *sanctitate veritatis, holiness of truth*, that

that is, in justice and holiness, which arises from truth; hence the image in glory, will consist in likeness to God, in knowledge, and perfect holiness.

6th, It is allowed, that the image of God in which man was made, included that dominion given him over the creatures; but it cannot be granted that the righteousness and purity of nature above-mentioned, was excluded from it; seeing the latter, would be absolutely necessary in order to the former; for he who governs others, must have wisdom to direct, justice and integrity to act uprightly, and to rule perpetually must be immortal. The third part of the divine image then consisted in the dominion given him over the inferior creatures; that saying of *Jehovah* particularly respects this, Gen. i. 26, 27. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." Herein man resembled his great creator and Lord, who himself rules over the armies of heaven, and the inhabitants of the earth, with this difference, God rules naturally, independently, absolutely and infinitely; man bears rule dependently, precariously, and with a proper limitation. To this may be added that image of immortality, which in respect of the *soul*, abideth after the fall, and by which, man becomes capable of eternal happiness or misery.

And, O my soul, art thou immortal. Must thou live for ever? And will sin and disobedience render thy being less desirable than not to be at all?

Will

Will sin separate between thee and God, and exclude thee from the blissful presence of thy maker, intercept the rays of communicated felicity, and expose thee to the indignant and killing frowns of offended majesty? How necessary is it then, that I should turn away from, and avoid the very paths that lead to sin, as I would wish to avoid, and escape those unquenchable flames of divine wrath, which the impenitent sinner must be for ever exposed to. My soul, thou art myself, I know it is but a little while, and I shall be all soul; this earthly tabernacle my body must be dissolved and moulder into it's primitive particles of dust and ashes; but thou must survive, *return to God*, and receive a righteous reward of all the deeds done on this body. May I esteem it then the highest wisdom, as, sure I am it will ensure the greatest happiness; while others are *making provisions for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof*, to regard this *one thing needful*, may I *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*; may I desire above all other things *to be found in him*. Come disease, come deaths in all your dreadful forms, besiege this citadel, break down it's walls, lay it level with the ground; yet shall the inhabitant defy your utmost rage, and taking refuge beneath the cross of a bleeding, dying Saviour, shall laugh at your menaces, and despise your power, triumphing with the blessed Paul, *death where is thy sting? Grave where is thy victory?* Thanks be to God, who maketh us more *than conquerors*, and *giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ*.

7th, Adam being thus created in the image of God, his obligations to love and gratitude, arising from the munificence of his creator and benefactor,

must needs be indispensable; and the law then engraved on his heart, and afterwards in tables of stone, the substance of which is, *thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength*, must be the reasonable service, of a reasonable creature, the object being the greatest good, must needs be worthy of supreme love and veneration. That the most high should condescend to enter into a covenant, with his new-made creature, by which he would engage himself to reward that obedience he by sovereign right had a claim unto, is an instance of condescension and goodness, we can never sufficiently admire; seeing all the possible advantage arising from such compact, must solely respect man, whose obedience and *goodness*, could not so *extend unto the Lord*, as that he should receive any addition to his compleat, and perfect felicity, nor on the contrary could the disobedience of an offending creature in any wise prejudice his essential blessedness. In consequence of this covenant God was pleased to enter into with Adam, he was not only influenced to obedience, and excited to an expectation of happiness, from God's *philanthropy*, but herein also the diviner generosity and faithfulness were engaged to see the fulfillment of every promise stipulated in the compact.

8th, In this first covenant, or covenant of nature, there are as in mutual compacts among men, two parties, viz. *God*, and *man*; *God* by right, as the creator and governor of man, might impose a law, and require obedience thereto, without engaging himself, by covenant and promise, to reward that obedience, and *man*, as a dependent

gent creature, and endued with rationality, was laid under a double obligation to obey, 1st, As he was made upright, and capacitated to keep the law of his maker; which was a reasonable service, and 2d, As he was now encouraged by the promise of reward. Although the covenant we now speak of is not expressly asserted by Moses, yet it is sufficiently manifest, both from the symbol of the tree of life, and from the penal sanction in the commination of death, which comprehended in it, the promise of life as it's contrary; as is manifest from various scriptures. Levit. xviii. 5, *which if a man do, he shall live in them*, Deut. xxvii, 26. Math. xix, 17. Gal. iii. 12. Why may not the prophet Hosea be supposed to refer to this covenant, chap. vi. 7. When the Israelites are said to have transgressed the covenant like Adam*, like parent, like children, for *can a bitter fountain send forth sweet waters? And who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.* This covenant, was partly general, and partly special, as it respected the moral or natural law, and the symbolical. It was general, as it had respect unto the knowledge and true worship of God, and love to man, &c. with all manner of holiness.

* *Veheemah keadam bhabru berith*, i. e. *they like Adam have transgressed the covenant.* Although these words may be expounded with an eye to man's inconstancy in general; yet they appear to me, to have a special reference to the covenant made with Adam in particular.—A similar way of speaking we meet with in the book of Job, ch. xxxi. 33. *If I covered my transgression (keadam) like Adam*, which plainly refers to Adam when attempting to hide himself from God, Gen. iii. 8, and to exculpate himself from the crime he stood accused of, ver. 12.

holiness; and it was special in respect to the forbidden fruit; in which, the obedience of the whole law was contained, as in a specimen, or compendium. The former was founded on the law of nature, not written in a book, but engraven and deeply impressed on the heart; the latter was symbolical and positive. *That* was special and primary; *this* only secondary. And notwithstanding the command was special which respected the symbolical law; yet obedience to the natural or moral law, was the thing chiefly required, and intended hereby, and of which obedience this was the test.

9th, To enquire what degree of happiness Adam enjoyed in paradise before his fall, how long his probationary state should have continued had he persevered in his obedience, and whether after full and sufficient proof given, he should have enjoyed a more blessed life on earth, or have been taken up to heaven, and been admitted to closer and more intimate fellowship with his maker, &c. &c. I say to enquire into things of this nature, is to grope in the dark, and conjecture at the greatest uncertainty, seeing the scriptures are in a great measure silent in such points; and where these have not a tongue to speak, we should be very cautious how we lend an ear to hear.

However it is an opinion most commonly received among the orthodox, that the promise of life made to Adam, and which was figured in the *tree of life*, not only respected a continuation of felicity in paradise; but a state of blessedness, heavenly and eternal. I shall not at present tarry to produce the arguments that might be urged in favour of this opinion; but I beg leave to observe,

serve, although we know not certainly what would have been, had Adam stood in his integrity; and primitive rectitude; yet we know by bitter experience what is, now that he has fallen from that state by sin and disobedience.

10th, This appears to be an undeniable truth, and deserves attention; that whatever Adam's state was before his fall, in other respects, it was less eligible than the true believer's in this; that whereas Adam was left to stand or fall, by his own strength, the believer in Jesus is upheld by one greater than himself; and while the former was left under a possibility of falling, the latter, has heaven and glory secured unto him by the power and faithfulness, of an almighty and unchangeable God. Adam in his integrity, enjoyed a present happiness, in a degree proportioned and suited to his state; but the foundation of his hope of abiding in that state or of an increase of that happiness, was feeble and tottering; whereas the true believer enjoys at present a happiness, which although less perfect in kind, and inferior in degree; yet has a hope of a perpetuity, increase, and perfection of that happiness, built on the most firm and stable basis. Hence to represent the state into which believers are brought by the death of Christ, and faith in his meritorious blood, as similar to that of Adam before his fall, is not only a gross misrepresentation of the believer's state, but greatly derogates from the worth and excellency of the mediator's blood, and depreciates almost to a mere nothing his spotless, and perfect righteousness.

11th, Adam in his first estate was free from sin, but not secure from falling by it, nor exempt from

temptation to it. Sufficient power was given him, to enable him to stand if rightly used, yet being created mutable, he was liable to fall. The difference betwixt Adam in his perfect state, and the true believer in Christ herein is, Adam had a *posse*, these a *velle*; Adam in paradise had a power to stand, yet left free to fall; believers in Christ, are made willing to stand, and upheld by omnipotence, shall not finally fall.

It has been enquired by some, what the first sin was that obtained place in Adam's heart. I think it is not to be doubted but many evils entered into the composition, such as pride, evil-desire, discontent, &c. But of this however we are well assured, that unbelief was a principal ingredient. God said, *in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*, the devil said, *ye shall not die*. To whom should Adam have hearkened? Had he not been guilty of an inattention, below the dignity of a rational creature, he would doubtless have indignated every species of being in heaven or earth, that should have dared to contradict what God had spoken. He listened to the subtle tempter, and seduced, fell; fell from his dignity, and rectitude, forfeited the favour of his best friend and bounteous benefactor; and aspiring to be as *God*, fell below, and utterly lost the happiness and dignity he possessed and enjoyed as *man*. He who, a little before stood at the head of the creation, and deputed Lord of all below, was now deservedly deposed, and degraded; and he who while obedient to the precepts of his maker, stood possessed of the image and favours of his God, was now driven as a vagabond from his presence, and bore the disgraceful badges of violated trust, in borrowing

rowing a hairy garment from the brute, to cover his own and his accomplice's naked bodies ; * and expelled the happy garden, are doomed to almost incessant and unavailing toil ; to eat bread in the sweat of their face, and dig a bitter and scanty morsel from the barren clod.

12th,

* *Unto Adam and to his wife, &c.* Some will needs have this to be understood figuratively, that God taught Adam and Eve to make these coats for themselves, as thinking it too low for the majesty of heaven to stoop to an office so mean, &c. But I see no reason for understanding the words of Moses otherwise, than in this plain and literal sense, *that the Lord God made coats of skins, and clothed them,* seeing He who by his word had called these skins from nothing, could by a single *nod* transform them as he pleased. Besides, why may not these coats themselves, as well as God's condescending to make them, be considered as a type of the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his great love and wonderful condescension, in working out that righteousness by a three and thirty years toil on earth ? And viewed in this light, it presents us not with fanciful, but real and interesting truths ; viz. that as these were probably the skins of beasts slain for sacrifice, (animal-food being not yet granted,) these beasts shadowed forth the bruised body of our *Saviour*, offered in sacrifice on the accursed tree, as a ransom for sinners, and for the sake of which, they are delivered from going down to the pit, Job xxxiii. 24. And their skins which were made into coats, to cover the naked bodies of the fallen pair, the holy and obedient life of Christ, by which, a righteousness is wrought out, to cover the naked souls of all believing in him.—I have called their coats disgraceful badges, and indeed what are those very garments we are so apt to pride ourselves in, but indications of our fall from God, and our shame and nakedness thereby ? And what can more loudly speak the degenerate, and stupified state of man, than that he should glory in his shame ; and having-lost his original righteousness, should endeavour to supply (by adorning his body,) the glory that is departed from his soul.

12th, As Adam's disobedience merited infinitely worse than was inflicted on him, he was so far from having cause to complain of cruelty or injustice in the sentence passed upon him, that he could not but acknowledge in the most significant expressions of gratitude, the clemency of his *maker* and *sovereign*, the mercy of his *judge*, and rejoice, greatly rejoice, in the salvation of the *Saviour* prepared, and more than hinted at in the serpent's curse and doom; and by the intervention of whom, he for the present obtained a reprieve from the death his sin deserved, and received a promise of compleat deliverance.

It being beside my present purpose to lay open, and insist upon the due desert of Adam's transgression, which otherwise might be easily proved, as I trust it is in my sermons on that subject, could be nothing less than an intire, and eternal exclusion from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, 2 Theff. i. 9. which banishment would have constituted that part of the misery of the damned consisting in the *pæna damni*, i. e. the punishment of loss; which would necessarily have been attended, with a keen and bitter reflection of ingratitude and folly, under the incessant clamours, and tormenting accusations of a guilty conscience. These, together with the fire which never shall be quenched, Mark ix. 44, said to be prepared for the devil and his angels, would have constituted, what some have called the *pæna sensus*, or the punishment of sense. Such is the dreadful, and wretched habitation prepared for the wicked, Job xviii. 21. and such must have been the dwelling of fallen Adam, had the curse in its rigour and severity, been executed upon him.

such, This sin of Adam, did not only affect himself, but all his posterity have cause to lament it; seeing matter of *fall* makes it evident, that they also at the greatest distance from him in the line of ordinary generation are affected by it. What state of mortality we all are subjected to, is no other than the necessary, and natural result of his sin and disobedience; he being the common root and fountain of all his posterity. If, in the ordinary course of generation, *like*, begets *like*, such as he was who begat, such must they be who are begotten of him; but the *former* is true, and manifest in all nature, therefore the *latter*. Hence, what Adam was, not in his perfect, but lapsed state, such must they necessarily be who spring from him; seeing in this state he began to propagate his race. Was the image of God defaced in the parent? Such must be the case of the child begotten by him; was the body of the *former* sentenced to mortality, with all the imperfections, pains and diseases, peculiar to a mortal state? Such would necessarily be the bodies of the *latter*, as begotten by him; the proof of which lamentable truth, is matter of *fact*.

But mortality, with all its wretched, and inseparable concomitants, is a punishment inflicted, and to consist with justice must infer previous guilt; therefore all the posterity of Adam being subjected to suffer, are supposed guilty. The above truth will receive no inconsiderable light and confirmation by attending to the account Moses has given of this matter. *In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him, Gen. v. 1.* Here we have Adam presented to our view in a perfect and upright state, as newly com-
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ing from the hands of the all-wise artist, and bearing the image of his own spotless purity, in respect to the moral rectitude of his intellectual powers; and so exactly corresponding with the great idea of his maker, that he pronounced him as placed at the head of the terrestrial creation to be *very good*; but in the third verse of the same chapter, we are informed that *Adam begat in his own likeness*; which draught if viewed in the mirror of God's most holy law, or compared with the fair, and perfect original, will be discovered to be deficient in all those lively and judicious touches, wherein similitude consisted, and scarcely to bear any resemblance to that image first stamped upon it. And it is evident, Moses intended a contrast in the first and third verses, that comparing man as he came out of the hands of his maker, with what he was, now fallen by sin and disobedience, we might learn the true state of things in a lapsed world; the great evil of sin, and our ruined condition thereby; otherwise, Moses had said, to the amount of nothing, *that he begat in his own likeness*, if he designed not to inform his readers *that his own likeness*, or *the likeness of himself* in the third verse, referring to Adam, might be considered as opposed to *the likeness of God*, in verse 1st, in which Adam was first created. As we therefore partake of mortal bodies, subject to disease, and death, we carry with us a sufficient proof of our original; nor had Cain himself a more visible *mark* of the divine displeasure upon him, than we bear in our bodies sentenced by a right and irrevocable decree to return to their primitive dust.

14th, Mortality is the effect of sin, *for by sin came death*, Rom. v. 12. as we then are mortal
crea-

creatures, it is in vain to attempt to shift the charge of being sinful creatures, the former necessarily implies the latter, and the decree which has appointed us to be born mortal, declares by such appointment, that we are born sinful, *for the judge of all the earth, will certainly do right*, Gen. xviii. 25. But how we become sinners by Adam's transgression, so as to be obnoxious to suffer, is what we are next to enquire into.

Original sin, is considered as twofold, *imputed*, and *inherent*; the former respects that one transgression wherein Adam sinned by eating the forbidden-fruit, which as he was the representative, and covenant head of his posterity, the *guilt* thereof is imputed to them also: the latter respects that inward defilement, and pollution of nature, which is derived, from him as the natural head, to all his descendants by ordinary generation. The inherent effects of Adam's sin, viz. defilement and pollution, may rather be considered as a fault than a crime, *macula, non reatus*; a disqualification for heaven, rather than that which deserves hell; and seems rather to be the result and effect of disobedience, than that disobedience itself. Various scripture passages may be produced to prove that the posterity of Adam are greatly injured by his sin; for every effect has some cause producing it, and where the one is visible, the other cannot be denied; but sorrow and suffering are the effect of sin, and these fasten upon those not personally guilty, therefore must be the consequence of another's sin.

15th, As Adam began to beget in his own likeness when fallen, so we are a little after presented with an awful account of overspreading wickedness,

edness, for *all flesh had corrupted his way*. Gen. vi. 12, and these various streams of iniquity, wherewith God was so much displeased, all issued from the corrupt fountain of a depraved heart, for God saw that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil, continually, ver. 5. *from his infancy*. * chap. viii. 21, Job's interrogation carries in it the force of a negative answer, *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* Job xiv. 4, and doubtless has respect unto the common and corrupted parent of us all. David also in bewailing and confessing his actual sins, traces the stream backward to the fountain head, and says, *behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*. § Ps. li. 5. There can be no foundation for supposing what some have insinuated, that David herein accused his parents of some crime in his conception, or that he was illegitimately born; but herein he acknowledges the wickedness of his life, to proceed from the corruption of his heart. Again, the necessity of regeneration may be urged as a flagrant proof of the defilement of our nature; for if we must necessarily

* *Infancy*, (nahharim) is used elsewhere, Lam. iii. 27. Ezek. iv. 14. 16. 22. &c. The Socinians would have this to be understood by a hyperbole, and to signify that a great part was corrupt, &c. But this cannot be allowed without stronger proof than can be deduced from this passage.

§ Nam verbum (*bholasti*) conceptus sum, referri non potest ad actionem gignendi parentum, sed ad corporis geniti formationem in utero; et (*jehhematni*) non significat gignere, aut concipere, quod parentum est, sed *califeri*, et *foveri* quod spectat ad foetum jam formatum et in peccato calefactum. Turret. in loc. non.

cessarily be *born again*, in order to enter into the kingdom of God, it is manifest that our inherent pollution and defilement unfits us for so holy an habitation. Again, we are said to be children of wrath *by nature*, Eph. ii. 3, which state of wrath, we are subjected to, either as we are esteemed guilty, or defiled, or both.

This pollution, and defilement of nature, together with that darkness of *understanding*, stubbornness of *will*, and vitiosity of *affection*, &c., are rather to be considered as the effects of some cause, or a punishment inflicted for some crime, than that crime itself, or the cause of other penal effects.

16th, All the children of Adam, by the righteous judgment of God, are included with their parent in the guilt of that one transgression, whereby he fell from his primitive rectitude; not only as they may be said to have sinned, in him as *Levi is said to have paid tithes in Abraham, being then in his loins*; but as the guilt of that one sin is imputed to them, so that they are accounted sinners, and treated as such. Many who use the term, *original sin*, yet differ widely in their opinions of it's effects upon Adam's offspring; and they who seem to favour the doctrine most in other respects, and engage in the defence of it, yet in order to exclude the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, deny also the imputation of Adam's sin. It were to be wished that the opposers of the imputation of Adam's sin to his offspring, and of the righteousness of Christ to believers, would seriously consider whether the arguments used by them, to invalidate and overthrow these, do not as forcibly militate against the imputation of our sins to Christ; and

and if they would not strengthen the hands of antichristians, and destroy the foundation of their own hope, they would open their minds to conviction, and admit truths that must rise superior to all opposition, untill the heavens be no more.

17th, When we speak of the imputation of Adam's sin, we have respect only to his first, not any of his after transgressions; nor do we regard any habitual depravity, but that actual violation of the covenant, his beneficent creator had been pleased to admit him into. Nor is it to be supposed that guilt was imputed to Adam's offspring because they were now defiled; but rather, that defilement, &c. is to be considered as a punishment inflicted on them, as previously guilty, as above.

When that is imputed to one or more persons which properly, and personally belongs to another, it is owing to some relation subsisting as common betwixt the parties; which relation may be 1st, *natural*, such is that between a father and his children 2d, *Moral*, and *political*, such as subsists between a king and his subjects, 3d, *Voluntary*, such as between or among friends, or a principal, and his surety. Hence, there is a twofold foundation of imputation between Christ and his people, by which our sins are imputed to him, and his righteousness, is imputed to us. 2 Cor. v. 21. But in the imputation now treated of, we have chiefly to do with the two former; in which the relation, 1st, Is *natural*, Adam being a father, we sons. 2d, *Political*, Adam standing as a prince, and representative of all mankind.

The ground of imputation therefore subsisting between Adam and us, is not only *natural*, for

to all his other sins might with equal right have been imputed to us; but especially *moral*, and *federal*, so that the covenant God made with Adam, was as the head and representative of his posterity; so that Adam acted not in this business, in the capacity of a *private*, but a *public* person, representing all his posterity, whence the demerit of his miscarriage justly appertains to them all.

As the capacity in which Adam acted, was by the just appointment of God, it was not necessary that we his offspring should be severally consulted in the affair; seeing it was the will of God that Adam should be looked upon, as the root and head of mankind, who therefore not for himself only, but for all his seed, should secure or forfeit all that happiness stipulated in the covenant; seeing all men were considered in that *one*, * not by a *specific*, or *numerical* union, but partly by an union of *origination*, because all are of one blood, and partly by an union of *representation*, because this *one man*, by a divine appointment represented *all*.

18th, That such was the covenant God made with Adam is manifest, 1st, Because, if the covenant made with Adam was not public and general, it behoved that God must enter into covenant with individuals, or there is no covenant subsisting between God and us, and the calamities we suffer must be the effect of causes different from those of our common parent. 2d, Adam received not the image of God in his creation, as a personal good, and peculiar to himself, but as a common

Quicunque ex illo uno multi in seipsis futuri erunt, in illo uno, unus homo erant, August. ep. 106.

from good, that he might transmit that image to his posterity, if he stood in his integrity; but on the contrary that lost and defaced in himself, should be lost also to his offspring. Adam as a *beneficiary* received a stock from God, for the use of himself, and children, on these terms, that if he embezzled his Lord's money, or rebelled against his prince he should be deprived of the benefit received both for himself and his.* 3d. The punishment inflicted for the offence, was not *special*, and *particular*; but *general*, and *universal*, extending to all his posterity; which could by no means consist with justice if the violated law, and the guilt arising therefrom, had not been equally extensive.

The consequence or penal effects of imputed sin, is either *privative*, or *positive*; the former consisting in a privation of original rectitude; the latter in an obnoxiousness to death temporal, and eternal; and although the second necessarily follows the first, (except God in mercy interpose) yet ought not to be confounded together. That *one* actual sin of Adam, may be said to be imputed to us *immediately*, from whence we become obnoxious to that penal privation, as the certain effect of such cause; and therefore in the order of nature, must necessarily precede that *corruption*, or *privation*; but as to the latter, it may be said to be imputed *mediately*, as to the *positive* part of the penalty, or real suffering; because we should not

* Quæ Deus Adamo largitus erat, non ipsi soli, sed etiam toti ipsius posteritati fuerunt data. ac proinde nos in ipsius persona spoliati bonis illis omnibus, in omnem hanc miserrimam et maledictionem incidimus. Confess. Galli.

not be obnoxious to that penalty, if we were not born corrupt and defiled.

19th, That the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to his offspring is evident, in that they suffer, who never personally sinned, even *infants*, but sufferings and death are the penalty of guilt, therefore they, even dying *infants*, are esteemed guilty, or they could not suffer by disease, &c. and die. So long as death holds dominion over our infant-race, the evidence is too full against us to be denied, or baffled, that we are under wrath; and if we read the word of God with attention, we need be at no loss to receive full information of the cause. *Death came into the world by sin*, saith the apostle Paul, and *sin entered by one man*, even Adam, Rom. v. 12. and, *so in Adam all die*. 1 Cor. xv, 22.* *By one man's offence death reigned*, and, *by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation*. And again, *By one man's disobedience many were made, (literally, constituted) sinners*, ver, 17, 18, 19. If the sin of Adam constituted his offspring guilty, and obnoxious to punishment, only as descending from him by natural generation; for the like reason, not only all his other sins would have affected them in the same

* I am aware that the apostle's argument in this place respects believers only, the resurrection of whom he is principally concerned to prove; yet doth it no less confirm the truth in hand, than if he had asserted this of individuals. For if the elect themselves, who through faith in Christ are delivered from hell, must yet pass through corruption to glory, much less are they who experience no such deliverance by him, exempted from that part of the curse, *bodily death*.

same manner ; but the sins and transgressions of every other parent also, must be charged upon, and constitute guilty all their descendants ; but a procedure of this kind cannot be admitted without a train of absurdities, and gross inconsistencies. Therefore the plain, rational, and most consistent way of accounting for the guilt which the posterity of Adam appears to lie under, is from the breach of that covenant, God made with him in the garden ; and in which he acted as the head of mankind ; the violation of which, by a just and righteous sentence, left the offender himself guilty, and all he stood engaged for. Hence all the world is brought in guilty before God, *by the disobedience of one man*, Rom. v. 18, 19, imputed to them ; and accordingly the sentence of death passed, and the punishment was inflicted, before the law was promulged on mount Sinai, or written in tables of stone, ver. 13.*

And

* The scope of the apostle's argument in this passage, is to prove that the guilt of Adam's sin, is imputed to his posterity ; and that by virtue of that law he transgressed, mankind is held guilty. Supposing some objecting the doctrine he was establishing ; " Sin is a transgression of some law, " but as yet there being no law existing, there could be no " transgression." The apostle replies, *untill the law*, that is, from the time that Adam fell, untill Moses gave forth the law to *Israel*, *sin was in the world*, even from the day that Adam disobeyed ; *but sin is not imputed when there is no law* ; that is, where there is no law, there can be no transgression ; but it is evident that the law existed, before it was promulged by *Moses*, seeing, *death reigned from Adam to Moses*, which both demonstrates the being of the law, and the imputation of sin by virtue thereof ; for where there is no offence, justice can inflict no penalty.

You'll

to And are we then obnoxious creatures, *conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity*, yea, by nature children of wrath? Humbling thought! And shall the sons of death and hell grow bold and insolent? Boast of birth and blood; talk of bright unsullied reason, rectitude, and purity? Pride themselves in the dignity of their make, and from the imaginary depths of their own wisdom, prescribe to omniscience? Be humbled O my soul, and sink into a deep sense of thine own vileness; confess unto God thy native impurity, lament and bewail at the throne of grace thy many, too many actual transgressions, and humbly sue for mercy in and through a gracious mediator.

How justly doth the Holy Ghost prefix to this haughty creature man, the epithet *vain, vain* man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass colt.* Job xi. 12. When one hears a per-

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You'll say perhaps, it was the law of nature written on their consciences, which then existed, the violation of which, rendered the offenders obnoxious to punishment; but *death reigned even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression*, that is, they who were never capable of committing actual sin, as Adam did, even new born babes, who therefore could not transgress the law of nature, were yet subject to death the penalty of sin, and hereby declared guilty of the violation of that law, first given to Adam their federal head.

* An humbling description this, of what we are by nature. The hebrew word (nabub) signifies hollow, or empty; and may be considered as opposed to that fullness spoken of by blessed Paul, *the fullness of God*; Adam was filled with glory and happiness, but by sin became an *Ichabod*. Yet after all, this vain, this empty creature, would be wise, reacheth after forbidden wisdom, treads in the steps of his diso-

son in a delirium, talk of thrones and kingdoms; &c. while the poor unhappy creature is shackled to the floor, having an obscure dungeon for his imaginary palace, and his throne of state, a bed of straw, it is impossible not to feel some tender and painful emotions of mind at such a spectacle of human wretchedness; and should we be less concerned for, or otherwise affected towards those, who while they profess themselves to be *compos mentis*, are yet as far from judging of the true state of things as the former; for *professing themselves to be wise*, and refusing to receive instruction from the word of God, their wisdom is brought to confusion, and their understanding is abolished, and brought to nothing.

Ye must be born again, said our Lord, to *Nicodemus*, *how can these things be*, said the Jewish teacher; discovering himself hereby, to be wholly untaught of the spirit of God, enveloped in the gloom of natural darkness, and an utter stranger to the things that pertained to his peace. Had he been taught of God, he would have been convinced of sin, and especially the sin of his nature, the guilt and defilement derived from Adam; and being sensible of this, his natural or acquired logic, might have solved his doubt in respect to the necessity of regeneration, and suggested

disobedient parents, and aiming at the tree of knowledge, will (if a miracle of grace and mercy prevents it not) lose the tree of life. *He is born like a wild ass's colt*, stupid as an ass, ungovernable as a wild ass; untameable, but by an almighty power, unteachable, but by the spirit of wisdom from above. Such is the distressful map of ruined nature, such is the moving picture of fallen man.

gested a familiar syllogism from whence to infer it. For if we are fallen creatures, have lost the image of God, and are defiled by sin; *we must be born again, seeing without holiness no man shall see the Lord*; but the spirit of God has convinced me that I am such creature; therefore, *I must be born again*. The syllogism is hypothetical, if we are fallen creatures, we must be born again; and if we must be born again, we are fallen creatures. In the truth of the former of these, is inferred the necessity of the latter; and the necessity of the latter evinces the truth of the former.

Yet will the clearest reasonings, and the most cogent arguments concerning spiritual things, be esteemed obscure, confused, and unintelligible by the *natural man*, * who has not a capacity to receive the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

This

* *Pseuchikos anthropos*, the natural man, this phrase is sneered at by some, as if it had no place in the bible, nor were any such men in the world as it describes. Others, will have the apostle to mean no other by the word, than one who lives in a course of intemperance, and indulges the desires of a fleshly mind. But as scripture best interprets scripture, let the apostle Jude be Paul's expositor, and he will furnish us with a sense of the phrase more comprehensive, and much better according with the scope of Paul's reasoning. (*Pseuchikoi*) *sensual*, that is, as immediately expounded by himself, *not having the spirit*, Jude 19. Therefore Paul's meaning appears to be, the natural man, that is, he who hath not the spirit of God, renewing his soul, and instructing him in divine matters, *receiveth not the things of the spirit of God*, being incapable thereof, by reason of the darkness of his understanding, through his alienation from God.

This is the wretched state of poor fallen mortals ; wretched indeed when we are led by the hand of the spirit, to see the mystery of iniquity within ; but more wretched still while the thick darkness remains on the mind, and both our state and danger are hid from our eyes. May these awful truths sink deep into the hearts of all whom they concern, and suitably impress the minds of those to whom they appertain.

20th, That the imputation of that *one* sin of Adam may yet be more fully manifested, let us attend more particularly to the apostolic account concerning it. *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*, from which words, we may produce the following arguments. 1st, From the scope of the apostle, which is to prove the doctrine of justification, by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, of which he had spoken before, chap. iv. 3, &c. and because such proceeding might seem marvellous and unusual, that one person should be justified by the righteousness of another, the apostle proves the truth of the fact by comparing Adam, and Christ, from whom imputation is made ; and from the opposite method of proceeding, wherein God derives condemnation upon all, by imputing the sin of *one* ; that in like manner as guilt, and death thereby, is derived from Adam, who was constituted the head and root of mankind by divine appointment ; so Christ the second Adam is appointed the head of all his people, that by his obedience they all might be justified. 2d, It is said concerning *sin*, that *by it death entered into the world, and passed upon all*, which cannot be referred to *inherent sin*, which

which itself supposes *actual*; but to that *actual sin*, by which *death* passed upon Adam, and all his offspring, as appears from ver. 18, where express mention is made of *that one sin*. 3d, That sin must be understood concerning which it can truly be said, *all have sinned*, and by which death entered into the world; but *sin entered* by that sin of Adam, and as all are declared sinners in that they suffer the penalty of sin, and not being in a capacity to sin personally, can only become such imputatively; therefore the sin treated of by the apostle, must be the sin of Adam imputed.*

4th, Paul not only speaks of sin in *general*, but of *one sin*, and of *one offence*, the guilt of which is come upon *all*, ver. 17, 18, 19, *as by one man's offence, death reigned, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, and by one man's disobedience many were constituted sinners, &c.*

Wherefore doth the apostle make such frequent mention of *one man, one offence, disobedience of one, &c.* not fewer than five times in a few verses, but in order to impress our minds with the truth of the doctrine now insisted on? For if we are guilty not by the imputation of that one sin, but in consequence of a polluted generation, condemnation could not with propriety be said to have past upon us *by one offence*, but by many.

Lastly, in ver. 14, the apostle calls Adam *the figure of him that was to come*, even Christ, and confirms

* Verbum (hemarton) propriè non potest trahi ad habitum peccati, vel ad corruptionem habitualement et inhærentem, sed propriè peccatum aliquod actuale notat; idque præteritum, quod non potest aliud esse, quam ipsum Adami peccatum. Turret.

firms the truth of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, by the certainty of a truth then received and believed in the churches, viz. the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. ¹⁸ Of which more hereafter. ^{immor}

21st, When Adam is thus viewed and considered, as the *father* of mankind, the *prince* of his people that should descend from him by ordinary generation, and the representative of all the human race in the covenant God was pleased in mercy to make with his people; I say, when viewed in this light, wherein can it be either unjust or cruel, to punish as well the represented, as the representative for breach of covenant, seeing both alike were entitled to the promised felicity resulting from obedience thereto? We have instances in scripture, not a few, where families and friends have suffered for the faults of others, which themselves in no wise abetted or encouraged. In the case of *Acban*, Jos. vii. 24, 25, the posterity of *Amalek*, 1 Sam. xv. 2, 3. The sons of *Saul*, 2 Sam. xxi. 6, &c. &c. Now as all, or most of these examples appear to have the approbation of heaven, we can in no wise doubt, but the penalties were inflicted in justice; seeing he who rules over all cannot approve what is not right.

22d, Sins merely *personal*, and sins of a *common and public* nature, are to be distinguished from one another; the former ought not to be imputed to their children, and of these that law is to be understood. Deut. xxiv. 16, *the fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers, every man shall be put to death for his own sin*: But then
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latter, of which kind was the sin of Adam, may justly be imputed. The act of one man, cannot be said to be an universal act, if it is merely personal, of which kind are the sins each of us daily commit; but this cannot be said of a common, or universal act, which pertains to all mankind, and of which sort was Adam's sin in the garden.

It is true, Adam was in himself, a single, individual person; but not so in respect to the capacity he acted in, but as the *principium*, and head of all mankind. Hence Adam's will in the *propriety of this action* may be said to be *singular*; but *by the right of representation, universal*; *singular*, as done by one individual person, *universal*, as all mankind was represented by that person. So the righteousness of Christ is the act of *one*; yet nevertheless by imputation it becomes the property of all the faithful; that which one did, they are all reckoned to have done, *if one died, all are dead.* 2 Cor. v, 15. Now although Adam acted as a public person in his perfect state, and therefore by sinning, involved his posterity in the common guilt and ruin with himself; yet he is not to be considered as such in the pardon he did, or might obtain, this being merely personal; as the favour and benefit, was supernatural, and gratuitous.

It cannot with due consideration be said, that the other sins Adam committed might with equal right be imputed to his offspring; seeing that in his first sin he acted as our representative, but his following sins were personal and therefore concerned himself only. Adam indeed by that one sin, did not cease to be our *head originally*, as we
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were all to come from him; but to be our *head representatively* he for ever ceased by that transgression; having violated the covenant God had entered into with him as our *head*.

2d, Some in insisting on the doctrine of original sin, have solved it wholly into inherent defilement, denying any thing of imputation; while others in opposing them, would allow it to consist in nothing else but imputed guilt; and herein, both have erred, and deviating on each hand, from the middle path of truth, have fallen on the opposite errors of the extremes; or rather, have treated those effects separate and apart, which connectedly flow from the same cause.

But others have more judiciously treated this weighty affair, shewing that *guilt* is necessarily derived to us from Adam as our *federal head*, and *defilement*, as he was our *natural head*. That the *former*, is the meritorious cause of the latter, our *inherent corruption*; and that the *latter*, is the penal effect of the *former*. That learned and judicious divine *Beza*, has these words, "There are three things which constitute a man guilty before God, 1st, *Culpa*, or blame derived from the *Protoplastus*, or first man, in whom we all have sinned, Rom. v. 12. 2d, Corruption, which is the punishment of that *culpa*, imposed both on Adam, and his posterity. 3d, The sins which men commit when adult, or actual transgressions." *Chamierus* has these words, "we deny that a person can be deemed unjust, by inherent defilement derived from one man; if the unrighteousness of that man be not first imputed to him." *Mestrezatius* says, "the righteousness of God could not impute Adam's
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"sin to us, if we had not been considered as in
 "his loins, and he our head." And again, "there
 "is certainly corruption derived to us from A-
 "dam; but the imputation of his disobedience
 "preceded this corruption; therefore defilement
 "is transmitted to us by generation, because we
 "had sinned in him as our head and representa-
 "tive. Also that learned divine *John Calvin*, de-
 "livers his judgment in this affair in words like these,
 "All the corruption and vitiosity we labour un-
 "der, flows from this fountain Adam, the com-
 "mon parent of mankind, who by his rebellion
 "alienated himself from God, forsook the foun-
 "tain of life and happiness, and rendered him-
 "self obnoxious to all misery; from whence it
 "comes to pass, that every man born into the
 "world is infected with original sin, and from
 "the womb of his mother, is under the wrath,
 "and curse of God, not only for another's crime,
 "but also by reason of his inward defilement."
 And again, the same writer, "for the offence of
 "one man, all are accounted worthy of death,
 "one sinned, all are held obnoxious to suffer."
 I might adduce almost numberless authorities
 of the above kind, *men*, whom learning and piety
 have rendered amiable and useful, in the several
 ages and places, where the church of Christ has
 been blest with their labours; but these for the
 present shall suffice, whose names, and sentiments
 I have briefly inserted, in order to shew that the
 doctrine here insisted on, is so far from being up-
 start, and novel, that it has been received in the
 church as a scripture doctrine, ever since the re-
 formation, and has the suffrage of men of no mean
 character to support it. I have been the more
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large and particular on this first imputation, because it almost undeniably infers the third; for, if the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity be proved, the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers can scarcely be disproved.

24th, And now reader lest thou and I should read and write to no profit, let us recapitulate the preceeding things; let us take the substance of what has been said, and try to make it useful. If thou art persuaded of the truth of this doctrine, thou must needs consider thyself as a miracle of mercy; what, *guilty*, and *defiled*, yet not in hell? 'Tis wonder all. Perhaps thou art yet an unbeliever, in an unregenerate state, in the same condition in which thou wert born; and if this is indeed thy case, it is most wretched and deplorable, there is but one step betwixt thy soul, and eternal death. Thy *defilement* and *pollution*, O my fellow sinner, unfits thee for heaven, for no unclean thing can enter there, Rev. xxi. 27. and thy *guilt*, the guilt derived from Adam, together with the guilt of thy manifold actual transgressions, have justly rendered thee obnoxious to the wrathful indignation of thy offended maker; who though he suffer long, yet will one day whet his sword, and take vengeance on all the sons of disobedience. And I exhort thee, think, dear reader think, how awful that day must be, when God will *rain snares, fire and brimstone, storm, and tempest*, upon all ungodly and impenitent sinners, and the cup of his fierce wrath shall be their deadly portion to drink for ever and ever. Is it possible, O my brother in transgression, and guiltiness, that any of the gilded toys of time should divert our minds from attending to this our miserable condition by nature?

ture? If so, it is an additional proof of the hardness of our hearts, the blindness of our minds, and the truly wretched state that sin has brought our souls into, which becomes the more deplorable, by how much the more we are insensible of it, and unconcerned about it.

But that I may not close this chapter, without opening some avenue, by which the rays of gospel light may shine upon the reader; let me inform thee O my friend, whoever thou art that readest, and conceivest of thyself as a fallen sinner, there is opened in this valley of *Achor* a comfortable door of hope. Are we sinners? We cannot deny the charge, if we should dare to do it, *we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*, 1 John i. 18. blessed be God, there is a saviour, *Jesus Christ the righteous*, who is saith the beloved disciple, *the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only* who are jews by birth, and have believed in Christ, *but for the sins of the whole world*, even gentiles also to the ends of the earth, chap. ii. 2. Did condemnation and death, come by the first Adam? Justification and life are by the second Adam. Does the guilt of the former imputed, constitute us heirs of wrath? The obedience and righteousness of the latter imputed, constitutes us heirs of grace and favour. If the image of God was lost to us in Adam, by sin and disobedience; we are restored in Christ, and renewed by his spirit *after the image of him that created us*.

In a word, our condition is deplorable, but not desperate; we are fallen, but help is laid on one mighty, and those comfortable words, may at all times cheer the drooping mind, of the conscious, and coming sinner; *whoever comes to me, I will in no wise cast out*, John vi. 37.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

TREAT we in this chapter of the second imputation, mentioned, chap. i. sect. 3. which respects Christ as the sinner's surety, *bearing their sins on his own body on the tree*, and suffering in their stead, the demerit of their offences. In the preceding chapter, we have investigated the source of human sorrow, and suffering; not assigning the cause to the opening of the feigned *Pandora's box*; but to the sin and disobedience of Adam in *paradise*; who truly had received gifts not from many gods, but from the one *Alabim*, God in covenant; *pan-dora*, all necessary gifts, power and abilities to constitute him happy, with all that should come from him, had they been rightly improved. And now having discovered and laid open the *cause*, our work in this chapter will be to point out the cure prepared, and preached to us sinners in the blessed gospel of our *Lord Jesus Christ*. *But, who hath believed the report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Is. liii. 1.

Persons labouring under some disease of body, are for the most part easily prevailed on (and that sometimes to a fault) to make use of any probable means for their recovery, and restoration, though prescribed by mere mountebanks, or empiricks; hence the woman mentioned in the gospel, who had an issue of blood, applied to many physicians, and spent her substance in procuring medicines as

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ineffectual, as expensive. And whence comes it to pass that people who profess to believe that their bodies are but a very inferior part of themselves, no other than *tabernacles*, * set up for the *soul*, the nobler part to reside in, for a little season, and then to be reduced to their original dust; are notwithstanding so anxiously careful to preserve the one, yet so extremely careless and negligent of the other? Is it because the present life is so much to be desired that in order to preserve it, we should hazard the loss of that to come? Surely no, for all men as it were with one voice, complain of the emptiness and vanity of the present life; and though not with their lips, declare in their lives, a dissatisfaction in all the present world can boast; and signify by their varied, but incessant pursuit after happiness, that they desire some distant good, they cannot attain unto, as expressed in the words of the royal psalmist, *who will shew us any good?* Ps. iv. 6. Nor is it, either because the soul is not more worthy of attention than the body, or so incapable of being disordered, or diseased, that no means, or medicines are necessary to its preservation, and welfare; but in fact,

* *Tabernacle*, so called by the apostle Paul, 2 Cor. v. 1, where we are taught that our bodies are as tabernacles in which our souls must dwell, for an appointed time, and then remove from this their earthly house. Our bodies are fitly compared to tabernacles, 1st, By reason of their frail construction. 2d, Their short and temporary existence. The consideration of this therefore, while it serves to humble our pride, and beget in us suitable conceptions of our fragile state; should excite our desires, and strengthen our purposes of securing an habitation for our souls more firm and durable, even *an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

fact, because present things strike so forcibly on the external senses, though altogether, vain, and transitory, that we can scarce attend to any thing else. In the mean time the disease of the soul strengthens, and runs so high, that (like persons under the power of some malignant fever,) we imagine ourselves well, neglect and refuse the salutary draught prepared, insensibly sicken, and languish in the very arms of a death most to be dreaded.

How necessary is it then for the ministers of the gospel; and the ambassadors of Christ to labour in this point, to convince men of their fallen condition, to recover them from their deathful delirium, and powerfully persuade them, evincing the truth of their arguments from God's most holy word, that *they are conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity*, and that *by nature they are children of wrath*: for until some conviction of this be wrought in their hearts, Christ will be esteemed by them as a physician of no value, his blood and righteousness will be slighted and disregarded, as things insignificant in themselves, or what are foreign to men, and from which they neither can, nor have need to receive any benefit. *The whole*, saith Christ, "need not a physician, but they that are sick," Matt. ix. 12. All indeed are infected with a deadly disease, and therefore all need a physician and Saviour, but few are sensible of their dangerous condition; hence it is, that when we speak of Christ crucified, and salvation by the cross, we are so little understood, and our doctrine for the most part, is treated with contempt. For the word, or preaching, of or concerning the cross, which holds forth Jesus Christ crucified, as the sole saviour of sinners, and the only way of sal-

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vation, is to them that perish foolishness; to the jews, the unhumbled self-justifying professors, a *stumbling block*, and to the greeks, the wise and pretended knowing ones of the world, *foolishness*, 1 Cor. i. 18, 23. Yet it has pleased God in every age by this *foolishness of preaching*, to save as many as be-
lieve, and to these, the gospel is manifestly *the power of God*, and to as many as are called, *but jews and greeks*, Christ and the gospel method of salvation by him, appears to be *the power of God, and the wisdom of God*.

2d, Any supposed plan of salvation which would infringe the justice of God, cannot be admitted in consistency with our natural notions of him, much less with what we learn from revelation. Herein it is declared, that he is *just and righteous*, Deut. xxxii. 4. that *he is a just God, and a Saviour*, Is. xlv. 21. and that when clouds and thick darkness are round about him, yet *righteousness, and true judgment are the habitation of his throne*, Ps. xcvi. 2, 89, 14. Yet, infinite wisdom has found out a way to preserve, inviolate the attributes of justice, yet *justify the ungodly*, Rom. iv. 5. This is that wisdom of God, which so much outshines, and confounds the wisdom of the world, that the *truth of God* is conceived of by them as a lye, and the *wisdom of God*, as matter of *foolishness*. All this was foretold, for, saith the oracle of God, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent*, Is. xxix. 14, 15. It is from revelation also, that we learn our wretched state by nature; * and the fountain head of

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* I am far from thinking that the bare reading of the scrip-

sin, and iniquity, is herein laid open and disclosed; and what should still engage our attention to this blessed book the more, is, we learn from thence our cure. The scriptures proclaim a full, and free salvation for poor ruined sinners, procured, by means the most marvellous, and astonishing, and insured to all the seed, by the veracity and faithfulness of *Jehovah* himself. The measure, or quality of *this love* exhibited in the redemption of fallen sinners, what tongue can express, what heart conceive? Was his recovery hard, and difficult? Means the most marvellous and astonishing must accomplish the arduous task. Was man become weak and helpless by his fall? Help must be laid upon one that is mighty, Ps. lxxxix. 19. and to redeem from death, a ruined race, the joy of angels, the delight of earth and heaven, must become man, and die.

3d, The imputation of our sins to Christ, as a doctrinal truth, depends upon the truth and certainty of the three following things, 1st, That sufferings and death are the penal effects of sin. 2d, That Christ did actually suffer and die. 3d, That he himself was free from all sin, for which punishment might justly be inflicted. The first of these

scriptures, no nor the most studious application to those sacred pages, without the irradiating influences of the spirit of God, can ever thoroughly instruct a person in the knowledge of himself, &c. But at the same time, I look upon the holy scriptures to be not only the ordinary, but most effectual means of leading into this knowledge; and therefore would exhort to the reading of them with prayer and supplication, in order thereby, thro' the divine blessing, to be *made wise unto salvation*.

I have spoken pretty largely to, in my former sermon on original sin; also in the preceding chapter we have necessarily been led all along to have recourse to this, so that what has been advanced relative thereto, (it is presumed) renders it unnecessary to resume the subject, or add any thing more to confirm it. And here I should immediately have dismissed this point, had not Socinus himself made an unexpected entry into my chamber, and insisted on bodily death being a consequence of nature, and not a punishment inflicted for, or because of sin. his own words are, *mors naturalis quatenus naturalis est, et omnibus communis; non est peccati stipendium, sed nature nostræ, quam ipsemet Adamus in ipsa creatione accepit, propria sequela*, lib. 3d, de serva cap. 8th, *id est, seeing death is common to all, it must therefore be a debt of nature, not a consequence of sin, &c.* But Paul's affirmation is of greater weight with me than Socinus' negation, *the wages of sin is death*, Rom. vi. 23, and *by sin came death*, v. 12. Therefore I conclude, with the suffrage of the inspired writers, that sufferings and death, are the penal effects of sin.

2d, That Christ did actually suffer, and that even unto death, is a truth, I suppose I may in this place take for granted, since to deny it would be to discredit, and disregard the holy scriptures. Therefore the premises granted, that suffering is the effect of sin, the consequence cannot be denied, that as Christ suffered even unto death, he must be some way chargeable with sin, the cause of that suffering. 3d, That Christ himself was free from all sin, for which, punishment might justly be inflicted, cannot but be granted, yea ought

ought to be contended for, by all who allow the truth, and sufficiency of his satisfaction; nor can the adversaries of this doctrine, (credit being given to the inspired writings) with a good countenance, affirm the contrary.

4th, The prophets and apostles all with one voice, being all instructed by one spirit, affirm, that Christ Jesus was pure from all sin; unblemished in his nature, and unblameable in his life, spotless within, and guiltless without. He that was born of Mary, called the son of God, was a *holy thing*, Luke i. 35, and such an high-priest became us, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners*, Heb. vii. 26, *neither was guilt found in his mouth*, 1 Pet. ii. 22, *he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth*. II. Tim. 9. And again, *in him there was no sin*, 1 John iii. 5. Now it is not easy to conceive, how Christ, who was thus holy in nature, and guiltless in life should (consistent with justice) become liable to suffer, and that in such degree, that no sorrow *was like to his sorrow*, if these sufferings were not the effect of sin. And it is no less easy to conceive how a person declared (by truth itself,) to be thus holy in heart and life, should become chargeable with sin, if it was not the sin of another. And how he could become chargeable with other's sins, but as they are reckoned, accounted, or imputed to him, I confess I have not penetration enough to discover.

Sin and death are inseparably connected, (pardon-
ing mercy not intervening,) the *former* necessarily
gives being to the *latter*, and the *latter* infallibly
denotes, and indicates the pre-existence of the
former; but Jesus Christ became subject, to the
latter

suffer, and was obedient to death, even the death of
 the cross, Phillip ii. 8. therefore was Jesus Christ
 some way chargeable with the former, viz. *sin*.
 He that is every way free from *sin and guilt* him-
 self, yet justly suffers for *sin, and guilt*; must suf-
 fer for the *sin and guilt* of another; but Jesus
 Christ was thus free from *sin and guilt*, vid. *supr*.
 therefore he must have suffered for the *sin and guilt*
 of another. Again, he who in such manner, and
 for such ends and purposes suffers for *another*, that
 for the sake of such sufferings, and for the sole
 meritorious cause of which, *that other* is released,
 and exempted from suffering, must be looked up-
 on and considered as the substitute of such ex-
 empted person, and his sufferings as *vicarious*; but
 Jesus Christ suffered in such manner, and for such
 ends and purposes as these, II. liii. 5. John iii.
 16. 1. Pet. 3. 18. and his sufferings are the sole me-
 ritorious cause of the believer's exemption from suf-
 fering. Job. xxxiii. 24. Rom. iii. 24. Eph. i. 7.
 therefore Jesus Christ is to be considered as the be-
 lieving sinner's substitute, and his sufferings as vi-
 carious. Once more, he who by any means becomes
 an actual and real substitute for another, must ne-
 cessarily be responsible for whatever his *principal*
 stands justly chargeable withal; yet it will by no
 means follow, that such acts, or deeds as the *prin-*
cipal is justly charged with, become the *proper*
 and *formal acts*, or deeds of his *substitute*; although
 as such, he is become responsible for them; but
 as it is impossible they should become his *properly*
 and *formally*, they must become his *imputatively*;
 there being no other way in which we can stand
 chargeable with guilt, but either as the crime is

our own *personal act*, or as for some reasons and causes, it is *imputed*, or *placed* to our account.

5th, No sooner had *sin* and its attendant *death*, made a dreadful entry into the world; but the intended overthrow, and total destruction of this fell pair, together with their murderous author the *devil*, was exhibited to the mortal parents of our race, now guilty at their maker's bar, in these words *be * shal' bruise thy head*, which bruising and overthrow, agreeable to the apostle John, consists in *destroying the works of the devil*, 1 John iii. 8. compared with Hosea xiii. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, &c. and Christ being thus preached in the first gospel-promise, and prediction, was ever after to be regarded as the Saviour of the world, and as *Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness*, so Christ was holden forth, from the time the promise was thus made, in a twofold manner, 1st, In this word of God, which though not yet committed to writing, was no doubt remembered by Adam, and rehearsed in the ears of his sons, and son's sons, until Moses, directed by the Holy-Ghost, recorded the promise itself *in totidem verbis*, in that book which preserved by the special care of heaven, shall hold forth the Lord Christ until he come to judge the quick and dead. 2d, In the sacrifices offered from Adam through all successive ages, until Christ the end of those sacrifices was manifested in the flesh.

It is highly probable such sacrifices were instituted

* *He*, so the original hebrew reads, in the masculine gender (*hu*) most probably referring to Christ, the woman's seed here intended; and perhaps with an eye to this, the *lxx* reads (*autos*) not it, but he.

tuted immediately * after the promise was made; in order that the minds of Adam and his fallen sons might be the more deeply impressed with a sense of the divine displeasure against sin, his *justice* in punishing it, and the absolute need of a Saviour, who as a substitute, and surety, should by a vicarious undertaking expiate, and atone it. It is said of Abel, whose offering was acceptable, that he offered *in faith*, Heb. xi. 4. that is, he had respect unto the blood of Christ when pouring

* And in process of time, Cain and Abel brought each an offering, &c. On which Mr. Henry says, Cain's was an acknowledgment made to God; but Abel's had respect unto the atonement.

Piscator on the passage speaks thus, sacrifices were appointed by God from the beginning of the world, as is manifest in the example of *Cain and Abel*; for if sacrifices had not been commanded by God, that of *Abel's* could not have been pleasing to him, seeing *will-worship* cannot be acceptable to God. Moreover, it is expressly affirmed, Heb. ii, that *Abel* offered in faith. and therefore was certainly persuaded, that he should please God, who had appointed sacrifices to be offered. And although these sacrifices may appear to have been eucharistical, that is, as expressions of gratitude for the manifold favours received from the beneficent hands of God. At the same time it is probable expiatory sacrifices were then appointed to be offered; that is, as types and sacraments of the expiatory sacrifice to be made by the offering of the body of Christ. For seeing God before the fall had added to the promise of eternal life, the sacrament of the *tree of life*; it is probable after the fall, that symbol, being removed, and a new promise given concerning the woman's seed, some suitable sign should be given as the seal thereof. Now such were all the legal sacrifices intended as expiatory, and by which God gave testimony that Christ should bruise the serpent's head, and by the sacrifice of himself, make atonement for the sins of the elect.

ing out the blood of his slain victim; and the apostle more than insinuates that this gave worth and acceptance to his sacrifice, for in *this*, it was more acceptable than Cain's.

Now it is but natural to suppose that *Abel*, and every other believing offerer, had some such conceptions, and believing views as these, when presenting the harmless victim at the bloody altar, and while the slaughter'd beast emitted with its reeking gore, its painful life. " This unblemished creature, faultless, as spotless, falls for me, and dies a death the due demerit of my aggravated crimes; thus in strict justice might the vengeful sword, have plunged its indignant point in my very soul; thus might the wrath of an offended God have broken forth upon me a sinful creature, and have consumed me in a moment; this, and more is my desert. But O the stupendous goodness of God, by whose gracious appointment, this inoffensive animal is offered, and accepted for me, and in this shadowy manner bears my sins and suffers in my stead. I know there is no virtue in the blood of these slain beasts to take away my sin, but I believe what God has said, shall surely come to pass, a seed shall rise victorious over all his foes, and being bruised, shall bruise the serpent's head, shall empty all his veins, and dying bleed the balm shall expiate my sin, and heal my wounded soul. I see him here prefigured, agonizing in the arms of death, breathless and pale he dies, he suffers, in my stead, a sinful, and obnoxious creature, HE, a spotless victim typified in this unblemished Lamb."

&c.

6th,

16th. It was scarce possible for the jews to have any other conceptions of the pardon of sin, and the removal of guilt, than by an imputative transfer of that sin and guilt to another; seeing every piacular victim would necessarily serve to beget, and confirm in them this notion. When an Israelite brought his burnt offering to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, Levit. i. 3. he must lay his hand upon the head of his offering; signifying thereby (say some) that he was fully willing, and disposed to give up all his claim and title in the beast, and to devote it wholly to the service of God. This perhaps might be intended; but that nothing more was intended thereby is not at all probable. For 1st, *The law was a shadow of good things to come*, Heb. x. 1. and the whole ceremonial dispensation was typical and figurative of Christ, and his benefits; so much the apostle teaches when he says, *the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ*, Gal. iii. 25. and, *Christ is the end of the law*, Rom. x. 4. *the body*, Coloss. ii. 17. of which all those temporary rites were the shadow.*

And indeed, as Christ is the foundation of the covenant of grace, so he is also the basis of all the scripture, and the centre to *which* all the lines of
reve-

* Deus veteres patres ad fidem venturi *Messia* erigere voluit, et sermonibus et actionibus loquendo. Non tantum promissiones ejus et oracula varia tradendo, quæ rei certitudinem probarent; sed et typos et figuras complures oculis exhibendo, quæ modum et circumstantias varias tam admirabilis mysterii efficacius representarent; ut ita umbris istis et picturis populus rudis adhuc et minorennis veluti elementis quibusdam deduceretur ad bonorum cælestium per *Christum*, acquirendorum apprehensionem, *Augustin.*

revelation flow, the types, and figures, as well as the promises, &c. 2d, All those sacrifices, &c. which should be abrogated by Christ, were certainly types of Christ; but such were those instituted by Moses, and offered by the jews under that economy, as the apostle to the Heb. confirms by various arguments; therefore legal sacrifices, &c. were types of Christ. 3d, The jews were daily taught to conceive of God, as a holy, sin-hating, and sin-punishing God, from the precepts of the moral law, and his manifold denunciations of wrath against sinners; and they were also taught to conceive of him, as a God with whom there was mercy, and who would not keep anger for ever, against those who sought him. This they learned partly from the declarations made of himself, and partly from the sacrifices appointed to be offered, daily and yearly, by which he might be placated and be propitious to such as had offended.

On the great day of atonement, or in the annual feast of expiation, Levit. xvi. 21. *Aaron must lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, which should be sent away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.* How could the beholders of this solemn act conceive of any other than a typical transfer of their sins and iniquities upon the scape-goat, * which was in reality no other than a type of

This scape-goat, was by the Jews called *Azazel*, concerning the meaning of which there have been various opinions. Some think it was so called from a mountain in the

of Christ. Besides, this appears to be the very thing they were intended to be taught; for it is added, *and the scape-goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities, to a land not inhabited.* It is certain, the goat could not be conceived to bear their sins, &c. in this *typical sort*, but by imputation; nor can the bearing of our sins, &c. be otherwise conceived of in the *antitype*. It is further manifest that the sins of the people were supposed to be laid on the *goat*, and that he carried them away, seeing the goat was afterwards esteemed to be unclean, by reason of the sins laid upon him, so that if any man touched him he was polluted thereby, and must wash his cloths, &c. *bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp,* Levit. xvi. 26. Now what Aaron was appointed to do annually in the face of the whole congregation, this did every one that offered privately at the door of the tabernacle, as to the substance of it; laying on his hands, confessing his sins, and putting them on the head of the victim; or rather, by an act of faith, on *him*, the victim represented. Thus our great sacrifice and Saviour, the woman's seed was daily shadowed forth, and the pro-

the desert where the *goat* was let loose; but others with greater probability of truth, that the goat obtained this name, solely from this ceremony, and make *azazel*, to be a word compounded of (*hhez*) a goat, and (*azal*) to send away. Piscat. so Kimchi.

The LXX call the goat, (*Apompaios*) i. e. one that drives, or carries away evil; supposing by this name, that the goat was not only sent away, but carried with him the sins, the *mala populorum*; and therefore fitly represented Christ, our (*apompaios*) who by bearing our sins, takes away our evils.

promise first made concerning the Messiah, must be repeated every day; each morning, and each evening, an unblemished lamb must speak of Jesus in a dying groan; and though in inarticulate, yet expressive accents, publish the necessity, and virtue of his efficacious blood.

7th, The prophets and apostles taught, and influenced by one and the same Spirit, speak the same things of the Messiah in respect to the great end, and gracious design of his coming into the world; and what those foretold concerning him, these testify to have been fulfilled in him. He shall, says the holy prophet Daniel, finish transgression, and bring in an everlasting righteousness; and the Messiah shall be cut off, chap. ix. 24, 26. The prophet Isaiah says, surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yea he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed, chap. 53. All we like sheep have gone astray, with one accord, and in imitation of our straying disobedient parents, have turned from the ways of God, stupidly, and ignorantly as sheep we have wandered from the fold; we have turned every one to his own way; a way not of God's choosing, but our own, a way suited to each one's particular taste and temper; a way seemingly right in each one's private, but mistaken opinion, for the end thereof is death. And the Lord hath laid * on him the iniquity of

* Laid on him, the hebrew verb, (*hiphgiabb*) signifies to rush with violence and impetuosity, as a lion, or some devouring beast, is wont to rush with eagerness on its prey.

all; exacting the utmost farthing of the debt he had engaged for; and inflicting all the punishment our iniquities had deserved.

Thus was the Messiah, already in the purpose of God, and pursuant to the redemption covenant, "cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken," ver. 8, "he had done no violence, neither was deceit in his mouth," ver. 9. Why then did he suffer? "That he might justify many," How shall this be done? "he shall bear their iniquities," ver. 11. These and the like things were foretold concerning the Lord Christ, yet so certain was the event, that the prophet *Isaiah* in this evangelical chapter, frequently speaks of future things in a past tense. Afterwards the apostles of our Lord whom he had chosen for this pur-

Dominus fecit in eum, agmine facto incurrere nostra peccata, sicut aquæ torrentis in foveam quandam deducuntur, Gerh. in loc. i, c.

*As waters falling down some mighty sleep,
With violence rush into the neighb'ring deep;
So did the Lord appoint to meet in him,
The sins and guilt of those he should redeem.*

The same word is used also with reference to a man, who with heat and fury falls upon his enemy to slay him; so it is used, *Judg. viii. 20*, where Gideon is said to have fallen upon Zeba and Zalmuna. Likewise *1 Sam. xxii. 18*, where Doeg is commanded to fall upon the priests of the Lord. This word therefore, strongly expresses the malignity of sin, which like a roaring lion rushed on it's prey, the meek and innocent lamb of God. 2d, The inflexibility of stern justice, which shewed no compassion to the co-equal, and only begotten son of God, when he stood in the place, and suffered in the stead of poor sinners. 3d, The most excruciating pain the Lord Jesus felt, when he was thus bruised, and his soul was made an offering for sin.

purpose, gave public testimony to all, and in every place, of the certain fulfillment of the things spoken concerning him by the prophets. No sooner had the apostles received the promise of the father, which they had been taught to wait for in *Jerusalem*, but under the extraordinary influence of the spirit, they began to teach and preach Christ, both to *jew* and *gentile*, testifying both to small and great, that he was the *Messiah*, the only and all-sufficient Saviour of poor sinners. "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." Acts ii. 37, for "to him give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins. Acts x. 43. Wonderous grace! Surprizing mercy! But how can this comport with justice? The most exactly, intimates the same apostle, for "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," 1 Pet. iii. 18. And the sins we stood chargeable with, and obnoxious for, have been placed to his account, and "he hath born them," as our substitute, "in his own body on the tree," chap. ii. 24.

When Saul was brought under the teachings of the same spirit, and began to sit at the feet of *Jesus*, as he formerly had done at *Gamaliel's*, he also began to publish the same things concerning Christ, proving and alledging from the writings of the prophets and the law of *Moses*, "that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead, and that this *Jesus* whom I preach is Christ. Acts xvii. 2. 3, giving all the assurances of salvation to sinners through faith in his name, "be it known, says he, "men and brethren, that through this man

“ man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.”
 “ ch. xiii. 38, he hath delivered us from the curse of
 “ the law, being made a curse for us, * Gal. iii. 13,
 “ all that believe in him, are justified from all things,
 “ from which they could not be justified by the
 “ law of Moses.” Acts xiii. 38, 39. Astonishing
 grace this, but how can it consist with a righte-
 ous and a holy law? Most admirably, for “ God
 “ hath made him to be sin & for us, who knew
 “ no

* Eam execrationem suscepit cui obnoxius non erat, cum
 suspensus fuit in ligno, ut execrationem solveret quæ adver-
 sum nos erat, i. e. He bore the curse when hanging on
 the tree, that he in no wise deserved, that he might free
 us from the curse we were obnoxious to. Oecumenius.

§ Some would have the greek word (*hamartia*) here ren-
 dered *sin*, to be rendered *sin-offering*, although it is observe-
 able it is necessarily rendered in the former sense where so-
 ever it occurs throughout the whole new testament, in the
 latter sense, not once: nor is there any just cause why it
 should be rendered *sin-offering* here, unless it be in order
 to destroy the antithesis in the former and latter clause of
 the verse, and hereby subvert the doctrine of imputed sin,
 and imputed righteousness so clearly established by the Ho-
 ly Ghost.—Beza has the following note upon the passage,
 which I beg leave to insert, *est vero peccatum interdum vo-*
catur victima ex hebræorum idolismo, apud quos sic acci-
pitur nomen (aham) ut Levit. vii. 2, tamen ratio anti-
thesis poscit ut potius Christus dicatur factus esse peccatum
pro nobis; i. e. Peccator, non in ipse, sed ex omnium nos-
trorum peccatorum reatu ipsi imputato.—Penetus, by fol-
 ly and extravagancy has reduced himself to extreme pover-
 ty; nor is this the worst, he has also contracted large debts
 which he is utterly unable to discharge. His creditor it seems
 has had much patience with him, but through ill-treat-
 ment is become severe, and now with unmitigated rigour
 demands full payment to be made. Penetus is quite insol-
 vent, nor is there ground for hope, that he should ever be

other-

"no sin," 2 Cor. v. 21, we by sin and disobedience had forfeited the divine favour and ruined our souls, but "Christ Jesus came into the world" to save sinners, which is a faithful saying, and "worthy of all acceptation," 1 Tim. i. 15, and this he effects "by the sacrifice of himself," Heb. ix. 28, "being once offered up to bear the sins" "of many, ver. 28.

Thus what the prophets had foretold concerning Christ, his death and the design thereof, &c. the apostles shew were fulfilled in him, and by him. And this preaching Christ crucified for sins, and the sinner's surety, and substitute, is what blessed Paul seems to have gloried in above all things, and to have esteemed as the very marrow, soul, and substance of his gospel; and that wherein his embassy principally consisted; God forbid, says he, *that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Gal. vi. 14. and to the Corinthians, I delivered unto you first of all, *that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures*, 1 Cor. xv. 3. Not to summon any other of the inspired penmen to the bar, who because they were taught by the same spirit, it is impossible they should bear an evidence contrary to those already heard; we may venture to rest the cause on their most clear, and ample testi-

otherwise; what can be done for him? *Plautianus* abundant in wealth, yet more so in generosity and goodness engages for the debt, gives security for the payment of it, and acquits the before distressed, but now joyful and transported *Penitus*. Now although *Plautianus* never contracted the debt he stands engaged for by extravagant living, yet he hath made himself debtor by (what I had almost called) extravagant loving. The application is easy.

testimony; seeing nothing less than a gross perversion of what the prophets and apostles have wrote, and a bold essay to subvert their meaning, can turn the current of the doctrine of imputation into another channel, or extort a verdict in favour of a contrary tenet.

8th, This then is *gospel* indeed, though we have sinned, are guilty, doubly guilty, before a holy sin punishing God, being sinners by nature, and sinners in practice; yet is there a foundation for hope of mercy in perfect consistency with justice; heaven's golden-gates are not for ever barred, nor is our sun gone down in everlasting night; for there is, hear it O heavens, be all attention, O earth, there is a SAVIOUR, an almighty SAVIOUR, rich in love, and plenteous in grace, *who casts out none that come unto him*, John vi. 37. *great in power, saving to the uttermost all that come unto God by him*, Heb. vii. 25. He is the great atonement, the (*copber*) the true mercy-seat, the one propitiatory sacrifice by which, *God is reconciled unto the world*, 2 Cor. v. 19. This my dear reader is the great mystery of salvation, this is the secret of God, which the princes of this world were ignorant of, when most bent to fulfil it, in crucifying *the Lord of glory*. By that one *offence*, of that one man *Adam*, many are subjected to *death*; by the one *obedience*, viz. the life and death, of that one man *Christ Jesus*, many are absolved, and entitled to *life*. *All sinned, one suffered, man was debtor, man discharged his debt.* * Sin and death

E

* Homo qui debuit, homo solvit; nam si unus inquit, pro-

death came by the fruit of the *tree*; redemption and life come by the *tree* also; the former was planted in *paradise*, and was deadly to touch; the latter was erected on *mount calvary*, and bare blessings in large clusters. The sin of Adam, excluded him and his seed from the presence of God, the soul-comforting presence of their *maker*, and cherubim and a flaming sword, forbade future access to the *tree of life*. But Christ the lamb of God, has borne our sins in his own body on the *tree*, turned away the wrath of heaven, quenched the flaming sword, and by his own blood hath consecrated a new and living way into the holy of holies. Heb. x. 19, 20, and hath opened also the kingdom of heaven to all who believe in him.

What discoverest thou O reader in this procedure, that merits thy disregard or contempt? Wherein does the doctrine of Christ's atonement appear to be absurd, or irrational? Why should the great lord and legislator of the world be esteemed deficient in *justice*, because he has been pleased in a way so wonderful to magnify his abounding *mercy* in appointing and accepting the sufferings of *one* every way qualified and fully willing, in behalf of another, by which wonderful plan, his justice is preserved inviolate, full reparation is made to his injured law, and his rich grace and mercy are hereby become the wonder and joy of men and angels? The work of salva-

pro omnibus mortuus est, ergo omnes mortui sunt, ut scilicet satisfactio unius omnibus imputetur; sicut omnium peccata unus ille portavit, nec alter jam inveniat, qui scilicet facit, alter qui satisfacit; quia caput et corpus unus est Christus. Bernardus Epist. ad Innocent.

tion is all wonder ; there is wonderful *wisdom* in the contrivance, wonderful *power* in accomplishing the design, satan and his rebel host subdued and vanquished ; a wonderful discovery of *justice*, in saving no sinner without adequate satisfaction ; a wonderful manifestation of *mercy*, in accepting one to suffer in the stead and place of another ; a wonderful *person* engages in the wonderful *work*, and wonderful love begins, carries on, and compleats the whole. Such love as this, which *God commends to us*, no man can shew ; friend may offer himself to death for friend ;* or some dear relative allied by blood, † &c. *yea peradventure some for a good man would even dare to die*, Rom. v. 7. but the love of God is manifested, and exercised towards us, when in a state of sin and alienation ; for when we were without *strength*, *sinners*, and *enemies*, Christ died for us, to *raise*, *reconcile*, and *restore us*, Rom. v. 6, 8, 10.

E 2

Reader

There is a story on record of two friends *Damon* and *Pythias*, one of whom the tyrant *Dyonisius* had condemned to die ; he asked a few days to set his house in order, which that he might procure, the other willingly offered himself to stay as a pledge, and to die in his place, if he did not return by the day appointed. The other faithfully returned according the time appointed, in order to receive his doom, and redeem his friend who had so deeply engaged for him ; when the tyrant saw such faithfulness in their friendship, he pardoned him that was appointed to die, and desired to be admitted a third in their friendship.

† It is recorded of *Zaleucus*, the lawgiver of *Locrensis*, that he appointed by law, that adulterers should have both their eyes put out. And it happening that his own son being taken in adultery, he, to preserve inviolate his law, yet manifest paternal affection to his son, put out one of his own eyes, to redeem one of the eyes of his son.

Reader is it possible thou canst believably meditate on these astonishing and interesting truths, as they stand on sacred record, and not find thy heart glow with gratitude and joy? Angels on their being obscurely shadowed in legal ceremonies, filled with wonder, and a holy curiosity, *desired to look into them.* Angels gladly published the news of the new-born Saviour to our wondering world, and *gave glory to God in the highest,* while *they proclaimed peace on earth, and good will towards men;* and shall man be silent in his praise? *Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me, magnify his holy name;* bless the Lord all ye his saints, and tell abroad from day to day the wonders of his grace and love. "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took the seed of Abraham, and because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise also himself took part of the same," Heb. ii. 14, 16, and that he might have *the right of redemption,* Jer. xxxii. 7 be our lawful (goel) redeemer, deliverer, &c. he assumed our nature, and became our elder brother. We were become poor, and had sold our possessions, yea our very souls *for nought,* Levit. xxv. 25, and Christ our kinsman redeemed us without money, not with gold and silver, nor any other corruptible thing, but with the precious blood that circulated through his own unblemished body, 1 Pet. i. 12.

Reader, before I conclude this chapter, I would beg leave to remind thee of the two greatest transactions that the sun hath seen; the *one* in paradise, the *other* on Mount Calvary; by the former of these came death, and all our woe; and whoever thou art that readest thou art concerned in this

this affair; no birth, nor blood can exempt thee from the common charge of guilt, which lies equally against all that spring from the loins of Adam: By the *latter* God is reconciled, and guilty sinners are absolved, through faith in him that died upon the cross. My brother sinner see the lamb of God, suspended on the tree, grow pale in death, and agonizing in the mortal combat; ah! what do I see? He bleeds from every pore; but O astonishing to tell, he bleeds the *balm*, that heals our wounded souls. How cheering was the word that closed the solemn scene, *it is finished*, when rightly understood, and believingly received! What more remains to be done? What after work? What further claim? *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* For, *Christ has died*, Rom. viii. 33. Thus may we by often looking to the rock from whence we are hewn, be humbled under a deep sense of our sin, and the sinfulness of our nature; that we may be as nothing and less than nothing in our own eyes; and with such believing views may we look to *Jesus*, that we may find in him an all-sufficient Saviour; for *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so is Jesus lifted up upon the pole of the gospel, that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish but have everlasting life*, John iii. 14, 15.

C H A P. IV.

THE posts went out being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace, Esth. iii. 15. Haman pleased at having succeeded so well in his bloody design, sits down to regale himself with wine, but the very Shushan was perplexed, and in every province whither soever the king's commandment, and his decree came, there was great mourning among the jews, chap. iv.

13. An horrible cloud of darkness pregnant with immediate death, was now stretched over the extensive empire of *Abasuerus*, and appeared ready to burst on the heads of all the circumcised tribes that dwelt in his dominion. It is death by law for Esther to come into the presence of the king; it is death by a malicious bloody decree to her kindred and nation if she does not come. This was indeed a day of darkness and distress, *Esther* uncalled for thirty days, *Mordecai* disgraced, and a swift decree gone forth stamped with the royal signature, to destroy and make a speedy end of all the jews in every province.

But how much more dark and distressful was the day when *Adam* forfeited the favour of his Lord and King, and fell into foul disgrace by sin and disobedience! Not the state of *Persia* only, but all the world became obnoxious to death; not only jews, but gentiles too, even all that should come from the loins of *Adam* were involved together with him in the guilt of his transgression. A law more stable and unalterable than that of the *Medes* and *Persians*, by which, it was death to

eat from that forbidden tree, was violated, and the penal-sanction thereof, death, was ready to be inflicted on the unhappy offender, and common parent of mankind. *Esther* must put on her royal robes to intercede, and become an advocate for her distressed friends and nation; *Christ*, the brightness of the father's glory, must put off his robes of royalty, and become a mediator for a lost and ruined world. Queen *Esther* engages for her own flesh, the jews; *Christ* assumes a body, that being our flesh, † he might engage in our cause. *Esther* undertakes for her friends; *Christ* undertakes, that from enemies he might make friends. † *She* is employed to revoke the deathful decree by abrogating the law; *HE*, to deliver those doomed to death, yet establish the law. || *She* risks the displeasure of *Abasureus*, and hereby exposes herself in much probability to death, to save her people from the purposed bloody massacre; *HE*, voluntarily lays down his life, § and courageously rushes into the arms of certain death, death armed with all the multiplied transgressions of his people, death the most formidable, and alarming, to save them from the curse and curse, sin and death. *Esther* was stirred up by *Mordecai* to interest herself in the important business of her nation; but *Christ* from his own philanthropy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, makes his people's cause his own, and gave himself for our sins. Eph. ii. 4. Gal. i. 4. *Esther* managed her affairs with so much prudence, that her kindred flesh was thereby saved from the bloody

OT in Phillip. ii. 6. † Heb. ii. 14. † Rom. v. 10.
 JEP Rom. iii. 13. § John x. 28.

bloody sentence ; *Christ* behaved so discreetly, that by his knowledge many even all that believe shall be justified, and eternally saved. If. lii. 13. liii. 11.

In a word, *Esther* the queen so well succeeded in what she undertook, and all her engagements issued so much in favour of the jews, that wicked *Haman* who had contrived their ruin, not only saw his hopes frustrated, and his bloody design quite overturned ; but the infamy and death he intended another, becomes his own unavoidable and miserable portion ; his character and fame now sinking as low in the esteem of his prince, as his body was raised high, a spectacle to the surprized courtiers and an example to all that should hear thereof, of an ambitious and bloody mind. At the same time the mourning jews are not only made to put off their sackcloth, but also to gird themselves with gladness ; and the disregarded and distressed *Mordecai* not only delivered from death, but taken into favour, exalted as the head of the people over the provinces of *Persia*, and receives as a token of the royal favour the ring of *Ahasuerus*, and a silken garment fit for those who stand in the presence of a king. So our *Lord Jesus Christ*, so honourably acquitted himself in his great undertaking, and so perfectly accomplished his mighty engagements, that his people who were become obnoxious to death by a righteous sentence, are not only delivered from going down to the pit, but through faith in this great *Mediator*, are accepted into favour, receive pledges and tokens of God's good pleasure in them and towards them, and are vested with a royal robe, the spotless righteousness

business of Christ imputed to them, in which they may stand with boldness in the presence of the King of kings.

2d, In the foregoing chapter we have spoken of the imputation of the believer's sins to Christ, have viewed the *Lamb of God*, offered upon the altar of his cross, in the room and place of his people, and in consequence of which they are delivered from the curse, freed from condemnation, and saved from wrath and hell. The business of this chapter will be to treat of the imputation of his righteousness unto them, whereby they obtain a title to heaven and glory; and which is the third kind of imputation, spoken of chap. the first.

3d, The glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, proclaims and publishes him as the only way of salvation, and the sole Saviour of sinners; and the method and manner by which this salvation is brought unto a fallen world is, by the blood of his cross, having hereby "redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. iii. 13. This "curse of the law," ver. 10th, is the penalty of disobedience, "curled is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them;" therefore Christ's ignominious and torturing death, by reason of which he was deemed curled, was the *ransom* paid for the redemption of his people, and by which "they are delivered from going down to the pit." Job xxxiii. 24, but cannot be allowed to be a price paid to purchase grace or glory. That grace and glory result from the righteousness of Christ, that is, his active and passive obedience, is readily granted, but that they

they are the result of the latter, abstracted from the former, as though bought and purchased thereby, does not appear from the word of God.

Lost sinners are represented in scripture, as being the object of the Redeemer's love, and (allow the expression) the commodity to be bought with the mediator's blood; hence says the apostle, "ye are bought with a price," 1 Cor. vi. 20, again, "ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men," ch. vii, 23, again, "ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, &c. but with the precious blood of Christ." 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. The people of God are frequently spoken of as his *possession*, *inheritance*, *portion*, &c. and as such are commonly said to be *redeemed*, and *purchased* by him. Eph. i. 14. Ps. lxxiv. 2. Acts xx, 28, &c.

To say or suppose that Christ's passive obedience, abstracted from his active, and without respect thereto, gives a believer a title to glory, is to separate and disjoin what God has put together in his eternal and all-wise counsel, and published in his word, as the matter of our faith; and had such an opinion any foundation to support it, the following unscriptural things would necessarily be built up together with it. 1st, That there is a law which gives life to some degree of imperfect obedience, or rather to disobedience, for there is no medium. Now such supposed law must stand in opposition to that perfect one, which is *holy*, *just*, and *good*, and whose voice is, *curst is every one that continueth not, in all things written in the book of the law to do them*; must issue from different motives, and aim at different ends; but Christ came not into the world to destroy, but to fulfil

fulfil the law. Math. v. 17. 2d, That the holy life of Christ, and that perfect and exact obedience he paid to the moral law, was no part of that covenant he was engaged in, and of which he was the head, and representative of his seed. Also that heaven and glory are not given as the reward of righteousness, but for reasons alien thereto; seeing the law does not so properly pronounce that man righteous, who violates it's precepts, tho' he suffer it's penalty, as he who pays a due regard to it's injunctions, and preserves them invariably inviolate. 3d, Such an opinion, must either be *antinomianism* in the worst sense, as it supposes heaven attainable, without the fulfillment of any law, in the principal, or surety; or, as it leaves us to fulfil the law in our own persons, in order to obtain heaven by our own obedience, is *pharisaism*.

4th, The scripture, as it regards man in his fallen state, constantly affirms, that salvation is not attainable by his own works, seeing he, in that state "is altogether as an unclean thing, and his righteousnesses are as filthy rags." II. lxiv. 6. and that there is no law existing, which can give a title to life, Gal. iii. 21, "but what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh," Rom. viii. 3. Hence not to him that *worketh*, but *believeth*, righteousness is imputed, for to him that *worketh* the reward is a debt, but to him that *believeth* it is of *grace*. Rom. iv. 5, and Paul affirms more than once, that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith," and "that by
" the

" the deeds of the law, no flesh living can be justified."

Justification by *faith*, stands opposed in scripture to justification by *works*; hence to suppose faith to be a work, so to be performed by us, as though it had in itself, some intrinsic worth, or that we should merit any thing by believing, is to put the blessing on mount *Ebal*, instead of *Gerrizzim*, that is, destroying the contrast of justification by *faith*, and by *works*, it is to put faith on the side of the law, instead of adjoining it to the gospel. However necessary therefore faith may be in order to the justification of a sinner; however excellent and useful in order to preserve, and increase the spiritual life of a saint; yet is it never to be considered as any way meritorious, nor filling in other place in the act of justification, than that of an eye to look at Christ, feet to come to Christ, a hand, &c. to receive the purchased and freely offered blessings from Christ.

5th, It has been generally allowed by all, that in order to find favour with God, and obtain heaven, we must be *righteous*, or have a *righteousness*; and it has been as generally a point of dispute what that *righteousness* should be, and from whence it should be obtained. The " Jews sought after such righteousness, but attained not unto it; but the Gentiles who sought not after righteousness obtained it." Rom. ix. 30, 31. The former sought *righteousness* by the law, that is, they presented their own imperfect obedience, as adequate to the requirements of the perfect law, in which balance being weighed, they were too light, to acquit and pronounce them righteous by a legal sentence; the latter, convinced of this im-

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perfection in their own works, and believing in Christ, were made partakers of a *righteousness*, adequate to the largest demands of God's holy law; by whose voice, and consentaneous to whose sentence, they were absolved, acquitted, accepted. Hence David describes the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord, imputeth *righteousness without works*. Rom. iv. 6, and Christ is said to be the *end of the law for righteousness*, &c. Rom. x. 3.

In scripture language, *faith* is said to be imputed for *righteousness*, as *Abraham believeth God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness*, and, *to him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is counted to him for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 3. 5. Hence some will have faith to be our righteousness, understanding these scriptures literally; which opinion could it be proved a truth, would necessarily discard and set aside the *obedience* of Christ, seeing a two-fold righteousness is not necessary. But this opinion can have no foundation but upon a supposition, that God the supreme legislator, will accept of a righteousness under the *gospel*, which is very different from that required by the *law*; which supposition has not only no foundation to support it in the holy scriptures, but must necessarily be attended with consequences not very agreeable to the plan of the *gospel*. For on this supposition, 1st, There must either be another *law* issued in respect of the *gospel*, less holy in its nature, and more mild in its exactions, than the moral law first imposed upon *Adam*, in his perfect state, and afterwards more explicitly given by the ministration of *Moses*; or, a righteousness illegal, and inadequate to the precepts of the moral law, must be accepted in the justification of a sinner. But
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heaven and earth, shall sooner pass away, than the former shall ever take place, Matt. v. 18. and the whole human race be left obnoxious to the curse, e'er God will justify and save them, in a way so dishonourable, and unbecoming as the latter, Gal. iii. 10. 2. God who is immutable in his nature, and unchangeable in his purposes, must on this supposition, vary his designs, and change his laws and ordinances, like a frail, and short-lived mortal; and by substituting faith for perfect righteousness, must lessen in our esteem, the *holiness* of his nature, on which the law is founded, the inflexibility of his *justice*, and the *odiousness* of *sin* which is opposed to both.

6th, The scripture every where sets forth the necessity of faith, in order to the justification of a sinner; but to put faith as the meritorious cause of such justification, would be most insufferable; seeing faith can possibly have no merit, as it is an operation of the spirit of God in the heart of a sinner now regenerate, and the glorious work of our *Immanuel*, can only lay claim to merit. *Faith* as above, can only be considered as an instrument in the matter of justification, receiving, and applying that righteousness which is necessary to salvation; but that which receives something without, and separate from itself, viz. that righteousness which is necessary to salvation, cannot be that righteousness itself; therefore faith cannot be that righteousness.

Furthermore, the scriptures speak of different degrees of faith, *O ye of little faith*. And, *how great is thy faith*, &c. So we read of lambs in the flock, and of children, young men, and fathers, &c. now if faith be our righteousness, accord-

According to the measure and degree of this faith, we are more or less righteous; and as faith is supposed to be imputed in the act of justification, a man must be more or less justified, as his faith is weak or strong, which I conceive to be an absurdity. Moreover, I think this tenet must be a very dry breast to believers in a time of trial and spiritual desertion; when joys seem withered, love cold, and the shield of faith totters, and the soul sees herself assaulted on every side; then to have no hopes of acceptance but in and through a righteousness so imperfect and weak, as faith is in such time of trial found to be, must needs be very uncomfortable to a poor creature's mind. Whereas on the contrary, when agreeable to the scripture doctrine of justification, faith takes hold on the righteousness of Christ, and his obedience, active and passive, is imputed to a poor sinner in his justification for righteousness, he needs no longer remain in doubt, and thereby in distress, whether his faith be strong enough to procure him a complete pardon, seeing that in the days of the greatest darkness and disquietude, when his faith is most feeble, and his comforts most fading, the glorious object of his faith is still the same; and the lowest degree of faith apprehends a righteousness perfect, compleat, and thoroughly acceptable to God, Is. xlii. 24. Hence it is the church can rejoice in the name of her bridegroom, and the honour conferred upon her in being named together with him, *the Lord our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6, xxxiii. 16, and each believer in particular can gladly say, *fully in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*, Is. xlv. 24.

27th, To argue, as some have done, that if a
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sinner be justified by the righteousness of Christ
 imputed to him, he is justified by the law, see-
 ing that righteousness consisted in a perfect con-
 formity thereto, is no better than vain jangling,
 and below the man of attention. What can we
 think would the blessed apostle have said to any
 one in his day, who should have dared in so gross
 and palpable a manner to have perverted his words,
 and wrested the force of his arguments? Doubt-
 less, with zeal no less rapid and fervent than that
 with which he defended the truth of the gospel,
 against the disturbers of the church of *Galatia*,
 he would have reproved the ignorance and inso-
 lence of such Antinomians, and opposers of the
 righteousness of Christ. "Ye vain, and self-
 seeking generation, how long will ye persist in
 your stupidity? Does not the gospel I have
 preached unto you principally tend to take you
 off from self-seeking and depending? Does it
 not wholly point you to the Lord Christ, and
 hold forth his righteousness as the sole merito-
 rious cause of your acceptance, and for the sake
 of which, ye as guilty sinners are imputed just
 in the presence and esteem of a holy God?
 Are not your own imperfect works, the best of
 which *come short of the glory of God*, contrasted
 in all my writings, with the compleat, and per-
 fect obedience of Christ, *who has magnified*
the law, and made it honourable. Think ye O
 vain men that God is such an one as yourself?
 Did he once give a law which required perfect
 obedience from his creatures, and can he now
 dispense with a righteousness which will bear a
 consistency of sin with it? Is Christ then become
 the minister of sin? Came he into the world to
 de-

“ defraud the law of what it juſtly demanded, and
 “ to do diſhonour to an eſſential attribute of the
 “ *deity*, viz. juſtice? Know O vain man, that hea-
 “ ven and earth ſhall paſs into nothing, ſooner than
 “ one jot, or one tittle of the law ſhall fail of per-
 “ feſt fulfillment. Nor can you ever ſtand before
 “ God, and in the congregation of the juſt, but
 “ as you are eſteemed righteous by juſtice itſelf,
 “ through the blood and righteouſneſs of the Lord
 “ Jeſus imputed to you, ſo that with the free and
 “ full conſent of both law and juſtice, you can
 “ enter into glory; for no ſinner will be unjuſtly
 “ ſaved.”

8th, The imputation of Chriſt’s righteouſneſs,
 ſeems not only to be moſt agreeable to the word
 of God, (as I hope to manifeſt more fully by and
 by;) but alſo appears to be moſt conſiſtent with
 the divine attributes, which hereby are made to
 harmonize, and ſweetly accord with each other;
 hereby, “ mercy and truth meet together, righ-
 “ teouſneſs and peace embrace each other,” Pſ.
 lxxxv. 10, in this moſt admirable, and beſt adapt-
 ed plan, we ſee the rights of government ſecured
 in a way and manner, that muſt reflect eternal
 honour on the wiſdom that contrived it; and the
 law of God hereby, abides immutable and in-
 flexible, as the unchangeable attribute on which it
 ſtands: Whereas a righteouſneſs any way defi-
 cient, and imperfect, will be found *a covering too*
narrow to wrap a naked ſinner in, Iſ. xxviii. 20.

9th, Some have thought their own righteouſ-
 neſs ſufficient to recommend them to God; of
 this number were the phariſees of old, and of the
 ſame ſpirit, temper, and opinion, are the ſelf-
 juſticiaries of this and every other age; but David’s

blessed man appears to be of a different stamp, he is *blessed*, truly so, for God pronounces him such, and none can reverse it; *righteousness is imputed to him*, not his own, but another's, for it is *imputed without works*; and what righteousness would avail a man for acceptance, that was not perfect? And where shall we find a righteousness perfect, and fully answering the holy law of God, except the righteousness of Christ? We have been led to take notice of the parallel the apostle to the Romans runs between the first and second *Adam*, chap. 2d, and here it may not be amiss to resume the thought, and consider that passage yet more carefully.

The apostle here informs us, that sin first introduced death into the world, and that in consequence of sin being imputed to all, death passed upon all; and that on the contrary as death came by sin, so life comes by righteousness, as the one was introduced by the first *Adam*, so the other is brought in by the second *Adam*; as sin was imputed from the former, so righteousness is imputed from the latter; and *as by one man's disobedience many, even all the posterity of Adam, were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of one, even the man Christ Jesus, many, viz. all his believing seed, shall be constituted righteous*, ver. 19—ver. 15, *much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace.* “ *The charisma, and dorema*, here spoken
 “ of, is the obedience of Christ imputed to us by
 “ the heavenly father. Nevertheless these two
 “ words *grace* and *gift*, may be thus distinguish-
 “ ed; the *one* respects free pardon and absolution,
 “ the *other*, a benefit bestowed on them who are
 “ thus absolved; even the righteousness of Christ
 “ im-

"imputed; by which their souls are adorned." As if some prince or potentate, from an act of clemency and goodness, should frankly forgive one of his poor subjects, who stood indebted to him a large sum of money; and should add to this favour the free donation of an immense treasure; then in the language of the apostle here is *grace* in pardoning, and the *gift* by *grace*, in conferring the royal favour. *Which is by one man Jesus Christ, the one and only Saviour of sinners, hath abounded unto many, even to as many as believe in him, ver. 16, and not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; i. e. not as the sin, the one sin, so is the dorema, the charisma, viz. the righteousness of Christ, which imputed to the believer, which extends its salutary influence to all his sins both original and actual, for the judgment was by one, that one sin of Adam, to condemnation, arising from imputed guilt; but the free gift, is of many offences; † free grace pardons all the offences of the believer, unto justification, § to full pardon, and favourable*

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accep-

* Cur autem Christi obedientiam (*charisma*,) bis vocarit, semel vero *dikaïomai* nempe versiculo 18th causa est manifesta, quia videlicet Christi justitiam non considerat absolute, sed *kata skefin*, eamque duplicem. Nam respectu Dei nobis illam imputantis, dicitur *charisma*, a gratificando: nostri vero ratione, qui per eam imputatam iusti sumus, merito dicitur *dikaïoma*, quod nos iustos efficiat, seu quod ea iusti fiamus, ut explicat ipse apostolus, ver. 19th, Bez. in loc.

† Gratia non tantummodo illud peccatum interfecit, sed etiam post illud introeunti peccata. August.

§ *Dikaïoma*, significat here, not only pardon but acceptance; not only freedom from guilt, but favour conferred, even the obedience of Christ by which we are made and accepted, as righteous.

acceptance, ver. 17, *for if by one man's offence, viz. Adam, death reigned by one, by that one offence, much more they which receive abundance of grace, the abounding grace of God in Christ, who is full of grace and truth, and from whose fulness we all receive the favour of every common blessing, and of the gift of righteousness, * the perfect and consummate obedience of Christ imputed to them, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ, shall, adorned in that spotless robe, be admitted into the presence of the king of kings, and dwell with him for ever, ver. 18. Therefore as by the offence of one, even Adam the representative of all mankind, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, the guilt of that one man's sin being imputed to all, laid them obnoxiousness to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, namely Jesus Christ, the head and representative of believers in the covenant of redemption; the free gift is come upon all men, unto justification of life, even upon all whom he represented, unto their full absolution, and final acceptance, § ver. 19. for as by*
one

* Gratiae nomen, ad omnia Dei beneficia pertineat, sed *doreas tes dikaiosunes* non de omnibus Dei beneficiis quæ per Christum percipimus, sed proprie de obedientie Christi imputatione. Bez.

§ Should it be said that *pantas anthropous, all men*, in the latter clause of the verse, stands opposed to, and extends as far as *pantas anthropous, all men*, in the former, it cannot be granted; seeing this would necessarily infer universal salvation. Furthermore it is observable, that the apostle's scope in this whole passage, is not simply to prove that bondage, captivity, &c. are derived to us from Adam, and enlargement, redemption, &c. by Christ, but that guilt, and condemnation arising from that guilt, is imputed to us
 from

one man's disobedience, viz that of Adam, many were made sinners, even all who descend from Adam by natural generation, are constituted sinners in him; so by the obedience of one, even Christ, shall many be made righteous, viz. all that shall believe on him to the end of time shall be constituted righteous, through his righteousness, imputed to them.

This whole passage so clearly and fully establishes the doctrine of imputed righteousness, that nothing but a gross perversion of the apostle's meaning and design can subvert it. For it is evident, this, and only this, was the thing intended from the twelfth verse of the chapter, where the collation betwixt Adam and Christ is begun; and although the doctrine of original sin, or the imputation of Adam's offence to his posterity, is fully proved therefrom, yet Paul's design was to clear up the doctrine of justification treated of in the foregoing chapter, and answer the cavils and objections that the adversaries of the gospel might raise against it. If any should say that the method was strange and unusual, that one man should be justified by the righteousness of another; not at all would the apostle say, seeing by the same method of proceeding, God has concluded all the world guilty by the sin of another; therefore as guilt, condemnation and death, came by *Adam*; so righteousness, absolution and life come by *Christ*.

F 3

10th,

from Adam, as our common head and representative in the first covenant; and righteousness, and absolution thereby, is imputed to us from Christ, the head and representative of the elect in the second covenant.

10th, That Christ is to be considered in the redemption covenant as the head and representative of his believing seed, the above passage sufficiently evinces; nor is this the only place in scripture that represents him in this light; Pl. lxxxix. 3d, *I have made a covenant with my chosen*, &c. where notwithstanding, the king of Israel is intended in a proximate sense, yet is evident from many passages in the after parts of the *Psalms*, the king of saints is intended in the ultimate. Again, "their governor shall proceed from the midst of them, (even Christ,) and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord," Jer. xxx. 21. And again, "behold the man whose name is the branch, even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace," (viz. the covenant of redemption,) shall be between them both, even *Jehovah* the father and *Jehovah* the son. Zech. vi. 12, 13. In this covenant, the father engages and covenants to give and insure to the son, a certain number of fallen sinners of mankind, who in consideration of, and for the sake of what he should do and suffer, should be delivered, from the demerit of their sins, restored to the favour of God, and be made partakers of everlasting felicity. If liii. 11. Math. i. 21. John vi. 37, xvii. 2, 9, &c. The son covenants and engages in behalf of these, to lay aside his glory, leave the bosom of his father, and because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, to assume their *nature*, and *form*, sub-
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ject himself to the law, whose precepts they had violated, and whose curse they now lay obnoxious to, that bearing and suffering the one, and obeying and fulfilling the other, he might justly claim for them *release and acceptance*. Phillip. ii. 6, 7. Heb. ii. 14. Gal. iii. 13. Eph. i. 6. John xvii. 2, &c.

Now if, (as it appears) Christ was the head and representative of his people in the covenant of redemption; all he engaged for, must necessarily stand or fall together with him; and as he should acquit himself in his engagements for them, they must partake the effects accordingly. But Christ the head of his people, dealt prudently, acquitted himself with honour, came off victorious in fight, vanquished his foes, routed his enemies, and *led captivity captive*. By a holy and obedient life, "he magnified the law, and brought in everlasting righteousness," Is. xlii. 21. Dan. ix. 24, and by the offering up of himself a sacrifice on the cross, in the room and place of his people, *he hath finished transgression and made an end of sin*. Hence all poor sinners believing in him, are by virtue of, and for his blood's sake, delivered from hell and damnation; and for the sake of his holy and obedient life, entitled to heaven, and eternal salvation. Or in other words, for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered, all his believing seed, who for their sins and iniquities had deserved hell, are not only delivered from the pit, but are accepted in the beloved, adopted into the family of heaven while here on earth, and have heaven and glory insured to them in the promises of God, when called to de. art.

11th, It is scarce possible for us to hear, and seri-

seriously meditate of this matchless, and unmerited love of God exhibited in Christ Jesus our Saviour, and not be led to enquire how all this is brought about; how it can comport with *justice*, that guilty creatures should not only be absolved, but accepted also, and treated as righteous, and really deserving. And, O precious answer! Well might David say of the word of God, that it was *dearer to him than thousands of gold and silver*, for this blessed word, gives a full and satisfactory answer to this important and interesting enquiry. Ask we why obnoxious sinners are acquitted? It is, says the blessed gospel, because God *hath found a ransom*.* Job xxxiii. 24, we had sinned, Jesus suffered;

* *A ransom*, the hebrew (*copher*) signifies to cover, and is accordingly translated *mercy-seat*. Exod. xxv. 21, being the covering of the ark of the testimony. And this *mercy-seat*, spoken of Heb. ix. 5, is by the same inspired writer, called the *hilasterion*. Rom. iii. 25. that is, our propitiation; so that Christ appears to be the true *mercy-seat*, the *copher*, the *atonement*, and *ransom* found for sinners.

I beg leave to add the note of no mean commentator on this passage. I have found a ransom, or propitiation; Jesus Christ is that ransom, so *Elibu* calls him, as *Job* had called him, his Redeemer, for he is both the purchaser, and the price, the priest and the sacrifice. So high was the value put upon souls, that nothing less would redeem them, and so great was the injury done by sin, that nothing less would atone for it, than the blood of the son of God, who gave himself a ransom for many. This is a ransom of God's finding, a contrivance of infinite wisdom; we could never have found it out ourselves, and the angels themselves could never have found it, it is the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, and such an invention as is, and will be the everlasting wonder of those principalities and powers that desire to look into it. Observe how God glories in the invention here. *eureka, eureka*, I have found, I have found the ransom, I, even I am he that hath done it. *Math. Henry*.

fered; for our transgressions he was stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, the just gave up himself to death, even a death most ignominious and excruciating, bare the sins of the unjust, that he might bring them to God. Do we enquire why vile and worthless sinners, are dealt with in so much mercy, treated with such wonderful loving kindness, that they are accepted, adopted, and beloved? The soul-transporting answer is, hear it with attention, and receive it with pleasure and gratitude, O my soul, and thou O christian reader whoever thou art; the answer I say is, *we are accepted in the beloved; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of grace, free, rich, and sovereign.* Jesus the everlasting, co-essential, and co-equal son of the everlasting father, hath undertaken for us, espoused our cause, borne our sin and sorrow, discharged our debts, and procured us favour and acceptance; and because he died for us we shall not die, and because he lived on earth below a holy and obedient life, *fulfilling all righteousness,* as our federal-head, and now for ever lives in heaven above to intercede, I say because of his life, we shall live also.

Glorious salvation, we who were guilty and obnoxious are absolved; we who were polluted and defiled, are accepted; “for he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”*

2 Cor,

* God made Christ sin for us, inasmuch as he imputed our sins to him, that he might suffer the punishment of them; and on the contrary, we are made the righteousness of God in Christ, inasmuch as God imputeth his righteousness to us, and

2 Cor. v. 21. Precious scripture this, each word is big with wonder; each word is most emphatical, and claims the closest attention. *He*, the father, God of immaculate purity, who cannot approve sin, nor accept the guilty sinner, as such, in love most stupendous and astonishing towards the deserved objects of his wrath, *made*, gave up, appointed, *him*, his only begotten son, *who thought it not robbery to be equal with God*, Phillip. ii. 6. *to be sin*, imputing the guilt of his offending creatures unto him, that in his own body he might bear them on the cross, and as a sin-offering might be sacrificed to expiate transgression, and as a sinner might suffer the desert of the sins of his people. And O wonderful to tell, *this*, he was made, *for us*, Lord *what is man*, *that thou art thus mindful of him*, or *what is a sinful child of man*, that thy son should be made sin for him! *For us*, angels are left confined in chains of darkness for their sins, but Jesus takes our nature, and is made sin *for us*, *he knew no sin*, immaculate in nature, guiltless in life; we knew nought but sin, *conceived in sin*, *brought forth in iniquity*, and *like lost sheep*, with one consent, *had gone astray*, yet, *was he made sin for us*. But O my soul, art thou not swallowed up in wonder, and sweet surprize! Amazement higher still, what was all this for? What to effect? Why does *Jebovah* bow the
skies,

and we are esteemed righteous for the sake of the obedience of Christ, *Piscat.* in loc.—*The righteousness of God*, not a righteousness inherent but imputed by God through faith. Therefore it is added (en auto) *in him*, so we are the righteousness of God in him, as he is sin for us, even by imputation, *Bez.* in loc.

acies, and in the habit of a poor stranger appear in this corrupted world, and sojourn amongst his own offending creatures? It was, " that we might " be made the righteousness of God in him,* that we might, (believing in him) be invested with that robe of righteousness, which might render us acceptable to God, might be clothed upon with that garment of salvation, which should bespeak us the purchase of his blood, and gain us admission into the presence chamber of the king of kings.

But how shall this righteousness become ours? By a gracious imputation, and, as it were, in exchange for our sins, for he took our sins, that we might become possessed of his righteousness through faith in him; he assumed the human nature, that we might partake of the divine, and
cloathed

* *The righteousness of God in him*, viz. that we might appear righteous before God, not in our inherent righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ imputed to us of God by faith; for the apostle adds not (*en auto*) *in him*, without design, but that he might signify unto us, that we are not justified by a righteousness of our own, but by the righteousness of another, even Christ's imputed to us. As Christ is said to have been *made sin for us who knew no sin*, such he was made by imputing our sins unto him; so on the contrary, that we are made righteous, it is by imputing his righteousness unto us. By this wonderful permutation, Christ hath taken upon himself our evil things, that he might impart unto us his good things: he took our *miser*y, that he might bestow on us his *mercy*; he took the *curse* due to us, that we might partake of his *blessedness*; he bowed to *death*, to raise us to *life*, and in order to this, took our *sins*, that we might take his *righteousness*. Turret.—*Ipse peccatum et nos iustitia, nec nostra sed Dei, nec in nobis sed in ipso, sicut ipse peccatum, non suum sed nostrum, nec in se, sed in nobis factus est*, August.

cloathed himself with rags, that we might be cloathed in royal robes. But will this righteousness be sufficient, will it gain us favour and acceptance? Yes saith the evangelical prophet, *the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake.* Is. xlii. 21. for it is every way commensurate to the large and extensive precepts of the holy law, it is a garment long and large, spotless as the sun, and whiter than the new fallen snow; arrayed in this, the vilest prostitute will find acceptance, and without this, the greatest professor will be rejected; when the bride, the church appears in this ornamental robe, *the king is delighted with her beauty,* access is given her into his presence, and he declares his approbation of her, saying, *thou art all fair my love, and there is no spot in thee,* Ps. xlv. 12, 14. Cant. iv. 7. This is the wedding* garment which all the accepted guests are cloathed with, and whoever shall be found without it, tho' he may have obtruded himself into the fellowship and society of the bridegrooms friends, will be detected and *cast into outer darkness,* for no righteousness will be admitted that is not perfect as the precept, and holy as him that gave it; but such righteousness is only to be found in the holy and obedient life of Christ.

Every true believer *puts on Christ,* not only by a par-

* The wedding-garment which alone can render us pleasing and acceptable to the heavenly king, who appoints the marriage, even to the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the spiritual bridegroom, and in which we may stand before him in judgment, is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us by faith; for the scripture knows of no other thing, for the sake of which, we may be accepted of God, obtain pardon of sin, and a right to eternal life. Chemnit.

a participation of his nature and spirit, and a conformity to his laws and life; but desires above all things that *Christ's righteousness* may be his uppermost garment. Thus prayed the great preacher to the gentiles, *that I may be found in him,** in the great and solemn day when God shall make up his jewels, let me be *found in him*, incorporated into him by faith, that I may be sheltered from the storm and tempest which naked souls must feel, and which *my own righteousness* which is of the law, can in no wise screen me from; let me therefore be found *in that righteousness, which is through the faith of Christ*, imputed through faith to every believer, even *the righteousness which is of God by faith*, which God imputes to them that believe, and in which he cannot but acquiesce.

It does not appear that Paul expected to appear as accepted, for his inherent righteousness, the very thought of which he earnestly deprecates; nor does it seem that Paul expected his faith to be his acceptable righteousness; but that which faith lays hold upon, and applies in the act of justification, and ever after has respect unto; now that righteousness which is *through faith*, or which
faith

* *To be found in Christ*, tacitly respects the judgment of God. For the father hath declared himself well pleased in Christ; therefore to them who are made one with him by faith, there is no condemnation, seeing that such are adorned with a righteousness such as he requireth, and cannot but be pleased with, even the perfect and compleat righteousness of Christ imputed to them by faith. Whereas on the contrary, whosoever are not found in Christ cannot escape condemnation, seeing they can produce no righteousness but their own. *Bez. on the passage.*

faith respects, cannot be faith itself; but the righteousness of Christ is that which faith always has respect unto, and must therefore be something different from itself.

12th, It is presumed, it was no more needful that Christ should perform in the obedience of his life, the duties peculiar to the several states and conditions of his people, in order that his active obedience might be imputed to them as their title to heaven, than it was needful for him to suffer all the peculiar aches, pains, diseases, and disquietudes common to the various states, conditions, and circumstances which an all-wise providence had subjected them to, in order to procure their deliverance from hell. In respect to the latter, what concerned him for the deliverance of his people, was to satisfy the injured law in whatever its pure precepts were violated; by suffering all it could possibly inflict on the offenders, so that in consequence thereof, they might with one voice triumph in the cause of their absolution, *who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died.* And hence in scripture Christ is said to be given to *lutron*.^{*} Math. xx. 28, and an *anilutron*. 1 Tim. ii. 6, by which his people are delivered from the curse due to their sins. And as he was the head and representative of his chosen seed, all that was necessary in the latter, in order to their acceptance, adoption, &c. was, the fulfilling the precepts of the law agreeable to that, *he that does these things shall*

* *To lutron* ipsam redemptionem non declarat. sed ejus pretium, i. e. quicquid datur ad eos redimendos qui captivi tenentur. *Eras.*

shall live in them. Nor doth that objection seem to have any weight, "that if we are justified by his life, his death was not necessary; but his death appears to have been necessary from the concurrent testimony of scripture; therefore we are not justified by his life." For to have made this argument solid and conclusive, it should have been said, if we are justified by his life only and abstractedly, then his death was not necessary; but I do not know that this is any where affirmed. The active and passive obedience of Christ, as they are the sole meritorious cause of a sinner's justification, are and ought to be considered as one great aggregate, inseparably connected, uniting their influence, and joining their agency to lay a firm foundation for reconciliation with God, pardon, peace, acceptance, adoption, heaven, and glory for believing sinners.

Yet should any man speak of the satisfaction of Christ's death, and the merit of his life distinctly and separate, ascribing to each a distinct part in the salvation of a sinner, I see not wherein the practice could justly be blamed; for remission of sin, and imputation of righteousness, stand related to each other as the cause and it's effect. For we are not to conceive of the procedure, as if God first pardon'd our sin, and afterwards imputed righteousness to us; but rather, 1st he imputes righteousness and for the sake of that righteousness imputed, he pardons our sin. For it seems necessary that the (*lutron*,) and satisfaction should so intervene that remission of sins may be obtained without infringing justice, and that there may be a lawful foundation laid for the absolatory sentence. The imputation of the righteousness of Christ, is the sole foundation and

and meritorious cause of a sinner's justification, which as it consists of two parts, viz. *absolution* and *adoption*, inseparably connected with each other, the former may well be supposed to respect the death, the latter the life of Christ, which considered jointly, presents us with a righteousness having at once a satisfactory, and a meritorious power. It is certain, the benefit resulting from the whole obedience of Christ is twofold, 1st, a deliverance from death. 2d, a title to life. For it is one thing to be loosed out of prison, another to be seated on a throne. Adam in his perfect state, deserved not the penalty of death, neither did he deserve the reward of life, his obedience yet being untried. Paul himself seems to have considered the blessings resulting from Christ's finished work distinctly, Gal. iv. 4, 5, *Christ was made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, i. e. from under the curse, that we might receive the adoption of sons, i. e. a right and title to life, which floweth from adoption.* Again, Acts xxvi. 18, *that they may receive remission of sins, and a lot among them that are sanctified.* So Christ is said, not only to have washed us, but also to have made us kings and priests unto God, &c. Rev. i. 5, 6.

But to lay the whole stress of our salvation in such sort on the Redeemer's death, as to disregard and disparage his holy and obedient life, as it is unscriptural, so it is a practice unsufferable, seeing we are hereby led to conceive of Christ as our surety and representative, in *one part* of his grand undertaking, but intirely to overlook him as acting in that character in *another*. As Christ engaged in behalf of his people, to deliver them from hell,

hell, and bring them to heaven and glory, he must accomplish his purpose consistent with the strictest justice, (for none will be saved unjustly, though the saved will be such undeservedly,) the transcript of which, was the fixed and invariable law of God. This law made no promise of life but to the obedient, *do and live*, but by what sophistry *disobey and die*, can be made equivalent to this, I know not ; and 'till this be done, it can never be proved that the sufferings of Christ *alone*, can give us a claim to heaven. It is granted, when a criminal has suffered the penalty of the law according to the nature of his crime, justice can exact no more, and in this sense he stands on equal footing with him who never transgressed the law at all ; but the latter of these was the case with *Adam* before his obedience was tried ; and that covenant obligation whereby life was to be continued, or increased, remained yet unfulfilled ; but believers in Christ Jesus are in a very different state, as shewn above. So long as we live in an unconverted state, so long we live as *Adam* left us by his fall from God, in a state of *wrath and condemnation*, Eph. ii. 3. John iii. 18, but when *we are translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of the son of God*. Coloss. i. 13, *the incorruptible seed is sown which liveth, and abideth for ever*. 1 Pet. i. 23, and the precious soul as one of the jewels of heaven, is kept by *the power of God, through faith unto salvation*, ch. i. 5.

13th, Reader if thou hast an interest in this precious Christ, these are truths, scripture truths, gospel truths ; this is the new wine of the kingdom which may well make glad thy heart. What canst thou want, that Christ has not to give ? What

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canst thou want that the God of our mercies will withhold, *he that spared not his son, but freely gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* Rom. viii. 32. Art thou weak in faith, and are thy graces feeble? Behold Christ is the bread of life, the true bread, the bread that cometh down from heaven; and as bread is the staff of life, so Christ shall be the strength and support of thy soul. If thou art thirsty Christ gives living water to thirsty souls, the weak he strengthens, the weary he refreshes, the mourners he cheers, the guilty he absolves, the imprisoned he looses, the blind he leads, the lame he upholds, he prepares a cordial for the sick, applies balm to the wounded, and O comfortable to tell, he cloaths the naked with a robe of righteousness.

When Joseph was called from prison to appear before Pharaoh the king of Egypt, he put off his prison cloaths and changed his raiment, and having obtained favour, he was not only cloathed, but adorned, he was arrayed in vestures of fine linen, and a chain of gold was put around his neck; and so it is with believers in Christ, *old things are put away, all things become new*; a new heart, a new life, new desires, new purposes, new aims, new ends, new pleasures, new companions, and (allow me to say dear reader,) *a new coat*.

The righteousness of Christ, is somewhat like Joseph's coat of divers colours, it is red and white, or as the bride rejoicingly sings of her beloved, *he is white and ruddy*, such is the robe his friends are adorned with; it is red in respect of his bloody death, not like Joseph's coat which was dipt in the blood of a kid, for Christ's garment was besmeared with his own blood, Is. lxiii. 2, it is white
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in respect to his perfect and most holy life; so that, (if I may so say,) the believer's garment, that is the righteousness of Christ, was woven from the wool of this heavenly lamb, by a three and thirty years toil, and at his death so sprinkled with his blood, that (as I said) it is a garment red and white. I would here observe O reader, that none partake of this garment, but renewed souls; Christ will never bestow this blessing on two sorts of people, 1st, On such as refuse instruction, and in no wise chuse the fear of the Lord; who esteem the preaching of the cross foolishness, and will not have him to reign over them; these loving to wallow in their own vomit of sin and filthiness, must never 'till changed, put on this robe of righteousness, and they can never be accepted without it. 2d, Such as are wrapping up themselves in their own imaginary goodness; and to whom Christ crucified, and salvation by his cross, is an occasion of stumbling; Christ will put his righteousness on none but naked sinners, who see and feel their need of such a covering, and therefore these must want the wedding garment when the king shall view his guests.

14th, The sweet singer of Israel records in a song the blessedness of the man *whose sins are covered*; now it is one special property of a garment to cover, but what can possibly cover our spiritual nakedness before God, and as it were hide our sins from his eyes, beside the righteousness wrought out by our Lord Jesus Christ? This renders us *acceptable to God*, Eph. i. 6. and as of old the *mercy-seat*, covered the tables of the decalogue, laid up in the ark of the covenant, so Christ is our *mercy-seat*, Rom. iii. 25. the *umbra-
culum*

solum gratia, which covereth our sins committed against the tables of God's most holy law. And as his righteousness is the most splendid and glorious, and fit for such to wear who stand in the presence of the king, therefore he says, *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear*, Rev. iii. 18.

The perfection of this righteousness is set forth in Ps. xlv. 10. where it is compared to gold of Ophir, the finest gold, and the queen (i. e. the church) is represented as vested therewith, adorned and ready for the bridegroom, exulting and singing, as in the words of the prophet, *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with THE robe of righteousness*. This is the vestment that Christ spreads over the deformity of his saints, Ezek. xvi. 8. it is the clean linen spoken of, Rev. xix. 8, which is said to be the *righteousness of saints*; not their inherent righteousness, this might be called their own, but the righteousness of Christ; it is said they wear it by special grant, for *it was granted*, &c. now that this is meant of the righteousness of Christ, appears from Rom. v. 18. viii. 4. where the same greek word is used to express the righteousness of Christ, viz. his active and passive obedience. The scriptures frequently bring an universal charge of sin against all men, for *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*, Rom. iii. 19. and, *there is none righteous no not one*, Ps. xiv. 3. And again, *in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified*. Now what righteousness can be sufficient

sufficient to recommend an unrighteous race, to the favour and acceptance of a holy God? No external works can avail to this purpose; our common parents sewed fig leaves, but they could not cover their nakedness therewith; now these fig-leave aprons were types of all those outward coverings men are apt to make in order to cover their naked souls, but they must be told that *their works will not profit them*. God no doubt intended to instruct *Adam* and *Eve*, when he cloathed them with the skins of beasts, probably slain for sacrifice, in the blessings couched in the serpent's curse, that the woman's seed then promised, should offer up his body to expiate their guilt, and by a holy and obedient life, weave out for them a garment that should cover their spiritual nakedness, and hide their shame and guilt.

When Jacob came in unto his father *Isaac*, to obtain the blessing, he put on goat-skins, and his elder brother's raiment; so we also must put on the righteousness of Christ, the raiment of our elder brother, if ever we obtain the blessing from our heavenly father. It was appointed under the law, for Aaron to be cloathed with garments glorious and beautiful, whenever he entered the holy of holies; so all believers, being made kings and priests unto God, Rev. i. 6, are cloathed with a beautiful and glorious garment, even the righteousness of the Lord Christ, *by whose power they have been made willing*, and whom they now worship in this beautiful dress, or in *the beauty of holiness*, Ps. cx. 3. This precious righteousness of Christ, is to the soul, what our common garments are to our bodies; *this* covers the nakedness of the body, *that* imputed by faith, covers the

the nakedness of the soul; the latter screens us from cold, &c. so doth the righteousness of Christ from the frigidity of sin, which almost freezes our affections, and benumbs us in spiritual duties; our garments also defend our bodies from the burning sun, so doth Christ's righteousness from the scorching heat of awakened wrath. Again, our garments are used as ornaments to the body, so the righteousness of Christ doth more especially ornament our souls, so that we hereby become acceptable to God.

God forbid the Israelites to wear garments made of woollen and linen, Deut. xxii. 11, no doubt intending to instruct us hereby, that Christ's spotless righteousness, and our own filthy rags, should not be joined together in the justification of a sinner; and indeed why should they, what part can they claim in the great work? What have the best of them merited? Surely nothing but shame and sorrow. What did Christ bring salvation in part, and leave us to finish the work begun? Or must we begin, and perform a part, and will Christ make up the deficiency? Must he be *alpha*, and we *omega*, or must we be *alpha*, and will he be *omega*? Let such dishonourable thoughts be far from our minds, if *Baal* be God serve him, but if the *Lord Christ* be *God*, let him have the glory. *His arm alone brought salvation*, to his name alone be all the praise.

15th, Upon the whole, what a glorious discovery doth the word of God make unto us, of his wisdom and goodness, in the redemption of lost sinners by means of a mediator; and what a firm foundation for hope, yea for the plerophory of hope, is laid up for every believer in the holy life,

life, and sin-stoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Can you fall of salvation who cast the anchor of your hope in him? No, it is impossible. Can the injured law arrest you and condemn you? No, Christ has suffered all that justice could inflict; inflict on one who had engaged in behalf of the obnoxious, and as a surety had bound himself to discharge the debts of his distressed people. Being found in Jesus need you fear acceptance? There is to thee O child of grace *no condemnation*, therefore thou canst never go to hell: but cloathed in the spotless garment wove out by Christ, *having on that righteousness which is of God through faith in Christ*, thou hast the strongest recommendation to the favour of God, and therefore shalt assuredly go to heaven.

This righteousness of Christ imputed to the believer, gives him as full an absolution from guilt, as if he had never offended, acquits as intirely in the eye of justice, as if he had never been attainted; and at the same time confers a title to heaven and glory, as full and incontestible, as if he had fulfilled all the precepts of the most holy law of God. In this most incomparably glorious plan of salvation, in which the attributes of deity shine forth with astonishing brightness, and sweetly harmonize in the most pleasing concord and agreement, do thou more and more employ thy noblest powers O my soul. Here is an abyis of wonder, a boundless and bottomless ocean of heavenly wisdom, and heavenly love lies open before thee; dare not too deep lest thou be swallowed up in the immensity of mystery; think not to sound infinite depths, with the short and scanty line of most enlightened reason, for nothing's here but infinitude
and

and incomprehensibility. In God's most blessed book, as in a garden fair, there let me often walk, no curse is here for those who live in Christ, nor barren land for sinners who believe.

And thou dear reader take this book, the book of God to be thy guide, so shall it be a lamp unto thy feet, and a light unto thy paths. Let this great salvation be uppermost in thy heart, and foremost on thy tongue, if thou hast tasted that the Lord is gracious, if Jesus has covered thy sins with his righteousness, be not ashamed to own him, nor be backward to follow him, make mention of him at all times, that his name may be magnified. And in the spirit of gratitude, and the language of triumph, let every believer say, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*, *Is. xlv. 24*, and *they who shall yet be born shall declare his righteousness*, *Pf. xxii. 31*. *Yea the heaven shall declare his righteousness*, *Pf. l. 6*, and his people shall enjoy the comfortable effects thereof, even, *quietness and assurance for ever*.

F I N I S.

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E R R A T A.

P. 5th l. 27th, r. Noah. P. 19th, l. 12th, r. law. P. 63d, l. 19th, r. away. P. 68th, l. 34th, after *guile*, leave out *was*. P. 72d, l. 11th, r. jargon. P. 72d, l. 33d, r. irascible. P. 74th, l. 13th, r. offerers. P. 84th l. 21st, after *Paul*, leave out *who*. P. 85th, l. 6th, r. engaging. P. 92d, l. 9th, r. Deity. P. 93d, l. 2d, r. and secured. P. 97th, l. 13th, r. one. P. 98th, l. 30th, r. *through*, before the fear of death. P. 100th, l. 14th, after *happy*, r. for. P. 108th, l. 9th, r. companions. P. 109th, l. 29th, where. P. 110th, l. 1st, leave out *as*. P. 139th, l. 25th, after *swallowed* r. up. P. 153d, l. 27th, r. law. P. 154th l. 29th, r. soul. P. 170th, l. 32d, r. orion. P. 174th, l. 33d, r. dictu. P. 178th, l. 21st, leave out *is*. P. 248th, l. 33d, r. human. P. 296th, l. 17th, after *really*, r. born; *ibid* l. 33d. after *fuch*, r. l. 1st, P. 297th, and after which, r. two last lines. P. 296th. P. 304th, l. 30th, r. different. P. 326th, l. 6th, r. thumlamata. P. 347th, l. 26th, r. dwindle.

